

UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

# A Genre Analytical Comparison of Real and Fake News

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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tutkielmassa vertaillaan uutisten ja valeuutisten rakenteita menetelmällä nimeltään move-analyysi, joka kuuluu genreanalyysiin. Genreanalyysi pyrkii tulkitsemaan, kuvailemaan ja selittämään genrejen ominaispiirteitä, ja move-analyysiä käytetään tunnistamaan yhteyksiä tekstin rakenteen ja sisällön välillä. Tutkielman tarkoituksena on selvittää, kuinka valeuutiset eroavat rakenteellisesti oikeista uutisista, mitkä rakenteelliset elementit voisivat auttaa valeuutisten tunnistamisessa, ja mikä on valeuutisten suhde oikeisiin uutisiin genren kannalta.</p> <p>Tutkielman aineisto koostuu 15 uutisesta ja 15 valeuutisesta, jotka ovat valittu Hornen ja Adalin vuonna 2017 kokoamasta ja julkisesti jakamasta yhdysvaltalaisen poliittisten uutisten aineistosta. Uutiset jaettiin tutkielmassa "move" -nimisiin osiin, jotka vastaavat yleistä tekstin osien viestinnällisistä pyrkimyksistä. "Movet" puolestaan jaettiin osiin niiden erilaisten ilmentymistapojen mukaan. Jakaminen tapahtui määrittelemällä tekstin osien eli "movien" ja niiden ilmentymien rajat ja funktiot lingvistisen analyysin ja uutisarvojen mukaan, käyttämällä myös apuna tutkimusta uutisten rakenteesta.</p> <p>Tutkielma löysi pääasiallisia rakenteellisia osia eli "moveja" neljä kappaletta uutisille ja viisi valeuutisille: "otsikko", "ingressi", "leipäteksti" ja "lisätieto" kummallekin genrelle ja "paatos" valeuutisille. Ilmenemistapoja löytyi kuusi: tapahtuman-, yksityiskohdan-, taustan-, lähteen-, ja seurauksen raportti ja lisäksi kommentti. Tutkielman tulosten mukaan genret eroavat toisistaan siten, että artikkeleiden alussa ja lopussa valeuutisten sisältö painottuu mielipiteen ilmaisuun vahvemmin kuin oikeissa uutisissa. Oikeat uutiset seuraavat rakennetta, jossa tärkein esitetään ensin, mutta valeuutisissa on uutisia, jotka antavat yhtä suuren painoarvon myös artikkelin lopulle. Uutisaiheen kommentointi valeuutisissa on myös henkilökohtaisempaa kuin oikeissa uutisissa, ja sitä on enemmän, huolimatta siitä, että valeuutiset ovat keskimäärin aineistossa lyhyempiä. Valeuutisissa otsikon, leipätekstin ja ingressin suhteessa saattaa myös olla sisällöllisiä epäselvyyksiä ja lähteiden raportointi voi olla epäselvää, tai yksinkertaista ja toistavaa. Nämä erot voivat auttaa valeuutisten tunnistamisessa.</p> <p>Erot genrejen välillä voivat johtua siitä, mikä niissä nähdään keskeisenä uutisarvona: lukijan informoiminen, tai uutistapahtuman tai siihen liittyvien henkilöiden paheksuminen. Paheksunta näyttää tutkielman valossa olevan pääasiallinen valeuutisten jakama motiivi ja merkittävin ero uutisiin genrenä.</p>			
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## 1. Introduction

Fake news come in various forms, ranging from stories or statements yet without confirmation to deliberate fabrications intended to mislead the public. The proliferation of fake news (especially the malicious kind) around the world is a problem as they continue to polarize public opinion, divide people and political groups even further from each other, and influence elections and policy making. Fact-checking and debunking claims is a slow and labor-intensive process (Zhao, 2018: 2), so researchers have been working on ways to quickly and conveniently identify fake news. Recent research has (mostly) focused on “theoretical modelling of propagation, or identification methods based on black-box machine learning” (Zhao, 2018), producing promising results. For example, Pérez-Rosas et al. (2017) created an algorithm with a 78% accuracy for detecting fake news, and Stöckl (2018) has reached a precision of 98.7% with satirical news. Stöckl’s algorithm can also distinguish between news written by the news agency itself and paid articles from customers with an accuracy of 99% (Stöckl, 2018). However, we are still a long way away from a free, reliable, open-source, and publicly available tool that detects fake news for us across platforms, so there is still need for experts and volunteers to do manual filtering and fact-checking. It is therefore worthwhile to develop tools that aid manual fake news identification and the development of such an automatic tool, if at all possible.

Developing a new tool from scratch would be a tall order for an MA thesis, so I will instead focus on an existing tool used in genre analysis called ‘move analysis’, pioneered by John Swales (1990), and explore its usefulness in detecting and analyzing fake news items. Previous research has also focused largely on distinguishing stylistic and linguistic features of fake news, but I have yet to see a study that compares the textual structure of real and fake news, which my thesis could provide.

This thesis is situated within the field of genre analysis, a type of discourse analysis developed most notably by Bhatia (1993, 2004), Hyland (2000, 2005), and Swales, (1990, 2004). The working assumptions in genre analysis are that 1) genres perform functions: they have a ‘communicative purpose’, a goal, and 2) this goal informs the form of the text; its structure and linguistic expression (Swales 1990: 46-47). Since the goals of real and fake news are different,

we might expect them to also differ linguistically and in terms of structure, as the form and content of a text are connected (Swales, 1990). An analysis of the structure of real and fake news could therefore inform us about the different goals of these genres and possibly help us identify them.

One way to explore this connection and see whether the form and content of these genres interact differently or not, is a genre analytical method called 'move analysis'. It aims to fill the 'function-form gap' – in other words, to connect the form and the function; the structure and the meaning of a text – by establishing textual patterns called 'moves' (Moreno and Swales 2018: 41). An example of a move would be the polite ending in a job application. Both readers and writers of the genre understand that promotional efforts like job applications depend on the goodwill that they create (Bhatia 1993: 68), so it is necessary to close them politely. This shared understanding of the function of any concluding "thank you's" makes the interpretation of the conclusion similar between users of the genre. The convention to end an application politely exists out of necessity and serves a communicative intention that is subservient to the overall communicative purpose of the genre (Bhatia 1993: 30). These rhetorical moves give the genre its cognitive structure (Bhatia 1993: 30). The goal or the communicative purpose of the application is to solicit further contact and a job interview from the employer, and the polite ending that aims to create goodwill is a necessary part of it. The move exists to realize the purpose of the application and is integral to the structure of the genre. The aim of move analysis is to make these kinds of functions explicit.

If indeed real and fake news differ in terms of communicative purposes, they must also differ structurally, and in terms of the moves and strategies used to realize those purposes. Therefore, the aim of this thesis is to identify the moves and strategies of the genres 'news' and 'fake news' and to explain how they relate to the communicative purposes of the genres. The exact research questions I seek to answer are:

1. How do real and fake news differ structurally in terms of moves and their strategies and steps?
2. What is the relationship between real and fake news in terms of genre?
3. What structural elements of fake news might be useful in their identification?

A 2017 study by Horne & Adali found that in terms of structure, fake news tends to have a long title crammed with information and a short body text with lots of repetition (Horne & Adali, 2017: 5). An article of fake news is also often shorter than a real one, uses fewer technical words, punctuation, and quotes, and is more personal and self-referential (Horne & Adali, 2017: 6). I have not found studies that conduct a move analysis of fake news similar to my thesis, but I believe a move analysis would support these findings and make the connection between content and form in fake news even clearer.

The thesis begins with a description of the relevant theoretical background where a brief overview of the main focus of genre analysis is provided first, followed by an explanation of move analysis and its relationship with genre analysis. The following section, number three, contains a description of the data set used in the thesis along with justifications for its use, and section four elaborates on the methodology and explains how moves were created for both real and fake news. This is followed by an analysis that points out differences between the genres focusing on issues relevant to move analysis, such as strategies used to realize the moves and move order and obligatoriness. The thesis concludes with a discussion on the structural differences found in the analysis and the usefulness of structure as a means of identifying fake news. Reliability and generalizability of results and issues with methodology are also considered.

## 2. Background

### 2.1. What is genre analysis?

Genre analysis aims to interpret, describe and explain the rationale underlying genres (Bhatia 1993: 13) and focuses on the ways in which language is used in a particular setting (Swales, 1990), although specific definitions vary somewhat depending on researcher's theoretical background or orientation, as it is a multidisciplinary activity (Bhatia 1993: 16).

Bhatia (1993: 17-22) presents three orientations within genre analysis, which are a) linguistical, b) sociological, and c) psychological. These orientations formulate issues differently and adopt different methodologies, but a balanced approach to understanding genres requires 'cross-fertilization' between them, as Bhatia (1993: 16) suggests.

Many studies within genre analysis combine these orientations in some ways. Swales, for example, emphasizes both linguistic and social factors greatly in his definitions of ‘genre’ (Swales 1990, Bhatia 1993: 16), although his later formulations of genre as metaphor take psychological factors into account as well (Swales 2004, Khadka 2014: 143), and Swales has written a paper with Askehave (Askehave and Swales, 2000) that addresses his apparent lack of emphasis on psychological factors. Connor & Mauranen (1999: 48) also emphasize the social aspect of genres and define genre analysis as “the study of texts as social phenomena where recurrent patterns of structure and behavior help organize structures and behaviors into comprehensible and effective forms.” They subscribe to a definition of genre analysis that combines principles from Swalesian research on academic texts with theories of social construction (Connor & Mauranen, 1999: 48). These theories posit that writers manipulate genre structures depending on the situation and the purpose of writing, making the nature of genres dynamic (Bhatia, 1993; Berkenkotter and Huckin, 1995). Henry & Roseberry (2001) also note the importance of social factors, following Miller, who sees genres as social action (Miller, 1984). However, they combine genre analysis and corpus analysis – a more recent interest of Swales as well (Moreno & Swales 2018) – and place more importance on linguistic factors in their analysis (Henry & Roseberry, 2001), suggesting that the aim of genre analysis “is to relate the linguistic features of a genre to the actions they perform” (Henry & Roseberry 2001:153-154).

Previous studies have also combined genre analysis with other frameworks, such as critical discourse analysis and interdiscursivity. An example of this is a 2016 study by Yunfeng Ge, who studied sensationalism in media discourse, and found that Chinese legal news reports include several sensational strategies that promote the restructuring of legal news reports in China, even though the genre is highly institutionalized (Ge, 2016).

A central issue in genre analysis is the definition of ‘genre’. Researchers have traditionally defined it as either a) typification of rhetorical action (Bazerman, 1994; Berenkotter and Huckin, 1995; Miller, 1984), b) regularities of staged, goal-oriented social processes (Martin, 1984), or c) consistency of communicative purposes (Bhatia, 1993; Swales, 1990), depending on the theorist’s background. Despite these various definitions that focus on different aspects of genres, there is one criterion for genre identification that is often regarded as the “privileged criterion”



(Ge, 2016:25; Swales 1990: 47), regardless of the slight differences in definitions: that of communicative purpose. The concept refers to the intention(s) and goal(s) that an author has for writing a text; what they aim to achieve with it (Swales, 1990). According to Johns (1997: 24) the concept is used by many genre theorists because “purpose is an important consideration”, and that “one central point made by genre theorists and pedagogues in Australia and elsewhere is that purpose interacts with features of text at every discourse level” (Johns, 1997: 25). There have also been attempts to analyze genres without the concept: Halliday and Hasan (1989) got rid of communicative purpose in their approach to genre analysis and relied on the existence and arrangement of obligatory structural elements for genre identification. They regarded a text as an instance of a genre if it included the obligatory elements of a structural formula they developed (Askehave and Swales, 2000: 204). However, their model ran into problems with humor, impersonation, and parody, and was unable to distinguish them from their “serious” counterparts, testifying to the utility of ‘communicative purpose’ (Askehave and Swales, 2000: 205). Still, there have been issues with the operationalization of the concept, prompting Askehave & Swales to write a paper called *Genre identification and communicative purpose: a problem and a possible solution* (2000) to address them. They describe the central issue by saying that “purposes, goals or public outcomes are more evasive, multiple, layered, and complex than originally envisaged” (Askehave and Swales, 2000: 197). In other words, a single text can have multiple functions and purposes, some of which can even be hidden or contradictory. Askehave & Swales address the issue by defining genres as multifunctional and attribute them with a set of communicative purposes, instead of just one (Askehave and Swales, 2000; Ge, 2016:25). ‘Communicative purpose’ remains a central concept in genre analysis because ‘purpose’ provides a way of separating the real from the fake (Swales, 1990:47).

## 2.2. Relationship between move analysis and genre analysis

The general aim of a genre analysis is to identify the moves and strategies of a genre, the allowable order of the moves, and the key linguistic features. The next step is to explain why these features were chosen by expert users of the genre to achieve their communicative purpose.

(Henry & Roseberry, 2001:154)

The specific genre analytical method utilized in this thesis is ‘move analysis’ by John Swales. Sources for the methodology include Askehave & Swales (2000), Biber (2007), Connor & Mauranen (1999), Henry & Roseberry (2001), Khadka (2014), Ge (2016), Moreno & Swales (2018), and Swales (1990, 2004).

Move analysis is part of genre analysis. It is a method developed by Swales (1990) for dividing text into meaningful units, following the pattern 1) form 2) purpose 3) explanation. Swales developed move analysis to help advanced students for whom English is not their first language to improve their reading and writing of research articles in English (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 40). Versions of move analysis have been used by many researchers in order to uncover the underlying generic structure of many academic, professional and general genres (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 40-41). For example, the 2016 study by Yunfeng Ge on Chinese legal news reports found that they consist of four moves, each containing four steps (Ge 2016: 26). Khadka’s (2014) analysis of grant proposals found that no two grant proposals are the same and they vary a lot in terms of move order and obligatoriness (Khadka 2014: 160). Connor & Mauranen (1999) analyzed letters of application and found that they consist of twelve moves, five of which are obligatory, and two, namely ‘promoting the candidate’ and ‘polite ending strategies’, can be realized with multiple different strategies.

A major aim of move analysts has been the identification of the linguistic features characterizing the various rhetorical moves in research articles, often for pedagogic purposes (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 41). My interest in move analysis is in the way in which it presents the structure of the content of a text and bridges the gap between the form and the function of a text. It is a useful tool in analyzing how structure and content interact in news and if they interact differently in real and fake news.

Here are the main concepts relevant to move analysis:

A) Move: Functional part of text that contributes to the rhetorical purpose of the text as a whole (Connor & Mauranen 1999:154).

B) Rhetorical/communicative purpose: What a text aims to achieve (Swales 1990:46).

C) Strategy: A way a writer can realize their moves. One communicative purpose can be expressed with various strategies (Connor & Mauranen 1999:155).

D) Step: A sub-category of moves. Moves can have one or several steps or “phases” that, together, form a move. The difference between a ‘strategy’ and a ‘step’ is that steps are part of a series and in a specific order (Connor & Mauranen 1999:159).

E) Move order: Move order can be more or less fixed or flexible depending on genre (Connor & Mauranen 1999:158-159). This means that, for example, with a flexible move order, a move that is fourth in some texts within a genre may appear third in others.

F) Move obligatoriness: Some moves may be optional and may not appear in all instances of a genre (Connor & Mauranen 1999:158-159).

Move analysis is explained in more detail in section 4: Methodology.

### 2.3. Previous studies on fake news

As I mentioned in the introductory section, research on fake news has largely focused on either how fakes news spreads in social media or on ways to identify fake news (Zhao, 2018). Studies by Zhao (2018), Pérez-Rosas et al. (2017), Stöckl (2018), and Horne & Adali (2017) are all examples of these, and little attention has been given to the structure of fake news. This study aims to fill this gap and give us valuable insight into the nature of fake news.

Although the focus of these studies is quite different from that of my own, they still offer a valuable insight: the language of fake news is different enough from real news that programs can be written to identify them on that basis. Horne & Adali (2017) suggest that this is due to them employing different methods of persuasion. In other words, fake news is not written to look like real news, fooling the reader who does not check for reliability of the sources or the arguments in its content. Instead, their study shows that fake news in most cases is more similar to satire than to real news, leading them to conclude that persuasion in fake news is achieved through heuristics rather than the strength of arguments: “[...] fake news is targeted for audiences who are not likely to read beyond titles and is aimed at creating mental associations between entities and claims” (Horne & Adali, 2017: 1). If this is true, then fake news should differ from real news in terms of content. According to Swales (1990) and Moreno & Swales (2018), content and structure are connected. Therefore, a move analysis that focuses on the connection between content and structure should be able to show explicitly that the structures of real and fake news are different and could be used to identify fake news to some extent. The aims and therefore communicative

purposes of the two genres are also different, so I expect move analysis to reveal some differences in the structures and strategies of moves.

### 3. Data

The amount of data analyzed in similar qualitative studies varies – but not by much; Connor & Mauranen (1999) analyzed 34 grant proposals, Henry & Roseberry (2001) 40 letters of application (consisting of 1895 words) and Ge (2016) analyzed 50 Chinese legal news articles. To provide a reliable and somewhat generalizable analysis, the amount of real and fake news stories analyzed in my thesis is similar: 30 in total, 15 for both genres. Total word count for real news is 9,600 and fake news 7,600. The analyzed stories can be found in the appendix and they are numbered in the following way: RN1 refers to real news, story 1, RN2 is real news story 2, and so on. Likewise, fake news is shortened FN. Examples will refer to particular stories using these abbreviations.

The data itself comes from an independent news data set used in a 2017 study: "This Just In: Fake News Packs a Lot in Title, Uses Simpler, Repetitive Content in Text Body, More Similar to Satire than Real News" by Horne & Adali. The data is publicly available at <https://github.com/rpitrust/fakenewsdata1>. The file contains two sets of data, both containing political news. The first set was collected by BuzzFeed for a 2016 article on fake election news using the BuzzSumo content analysis tool on news on Facebook and it contains 36 real and 35 fake stories (Horne & Adali, 2017: 2). The second set was put together by Horne & Adali and contains 75 real, fake, and satirical news stories. The fake news sources come from Zimdars' (2016) list of fake and misleading news websites and have had at least 1 story show up as false on a fact-checking website like snopes.com in the past (Horne & Adali, 2017: 2-3). The real news sources are well established news outlets picked from Business Insider's "Most Trusted" list (Engel, 2014). Stories were selected randomly from these sources, provided they were "hard" news stories and not opinion pieces (Horne & Adali, 2017: 2-3). Table 1 below shows the sources for the news in data set 2.

Real sources	Fake sources	Satire sources
Wall Street Journal The Economist BBC NPR ABC CBS USA Today The Guardian NBC Washington Post	Ending the Fed True Pundit abcnews.com.co DC Gazette libertywritersnews Before its News Infowars Real News Right Now	The Onion Huff Post Satire Borowitz Report The Beaverton SatireWire Faking News

Table 1: Data set 2 sources (Horne & Adali 2017: 3)

In this thesis, I utilize the second data set created by the authors of the study instead of set 1, the reason being that it is unknown if there was any selection bias in the collection of set 1 as it was collected by BuzzFeed instead of the study's authors. This also allows me to avoid issues relating to fact checking, ground truth, and the definitions of 'real' and 'fake' news, as these have already been established by Horne & Adali. Mixing the data sets could also create issues with reliability as selection of news in each set was done using different criteria, so only one data set was chosen. I then excluded satirical news stories from the data as irrelevant to the thesis, along with features as they are a sub-genre of news that follows a slightly different structure than "hard" news and are significantly longer. I chose 15 stories for analysis in the order they appeared in the file, excluding fake news stories marked 001 and 009, and real news stories marked 120, 126, 137, 143, 151, 154, 157, 159, 165, and 166 for being features. Fake news number 7 was excluded as well for not being a news story: it completely violates news writing conventions by simply describing a talk in chronological order of events, resembling news both structure- and content-wise only by having a headline. Links, picture captions, meta-text, and anything not relevant to a story was also excluded from the data.

#### 4. Methodology

The news articles were analyzed in terms of structural units referred to as *moves*. Connor & Mauranen (1999: 51) call moves "functional units" that are used "for some identifiable rhetorical purpose," and according to Mauranen (1993: 225), they can vary in size, but normally contain at least one proposition and typically exhibit some internal coherence. Swales (1990) described moves as functional parts of text that contribute to the communicative purpose of the text as a

whole, but he has later (Swales, 2004: 228–229) changed his definition slightly to “discoursal or rhetorical units performing coherent communicative functions in texts” and specified that their linguistic realizations may vary in length and in other ways. The new definition accounts for the possibility that texts may have multiple functions instead of just one.

An example of a move could be the headline of a news article. The communicative purpose of a “hard” news story is to inform the reader (Bell, 1991: 14). The headline is a distinct part of a news article, separated from the rest of the text. It contributes to the communicative purpose of the text as a whole (informing the reader) by providing the viewer the most important information in the article so they can decide whether to read it or not (which is the communicative purpose of the move that is subservient to informing the reader). The following parts of an article provide further details and have different rhetorical purposes, so they are considered different moves.

There are also many ways a writer can realize a particular move. According to Swales (1990) and Henry & Roseberry (2001), the different ways a writer can realize his or her moves are called *strategies*. Whereas a headline aims to attract the reader, a strategy called ‘commentary’ can be used to help in this by providing an evaluative exclamation that contributes to attracting a reader, such as WHOA! or BREAKING BOMBSHELL! as often seen in fake news.

The following sections describe the identification of both moves and strategies. Specific moves and strategies, their communicative purposes and issues related to move order, obligatoriness and key linguistic features are discussed in detail in section 5. Analytical results.

#### 4.1. Identification of moves and strategies

Connor & Mauranen (1999: 51) describe the process of identifying moves as follows: first, the rhetorical objectives of the text need to be identified and analytical interest is to be related to them, and second, the text needs to be divided into meaningful units based on linguistic cues that indicate unit function and/or boundary. Connor & Mauranen (1999: 51) analyzed grant proposals and used EU guidelines for proposal writing to aid the identification of rhetorical objectives and establishment of moves. I utilized a similar strategy and consulted Bell’s *The Language of News Media* (1991) which provided a rough idea of the rhetorical objectives of news, how news articles are structured, and how moves could potentially be developed. In terms of rhetorical objectives, or communicative purposes in other words, the political news under investigation in this study

fall under “hard news”, although the distinction between “hard” and “soft” news is not always easy to make (Bell 1991:14). “Hard news” informs readers of accidents, crimes, conflicts, announcements, discoveries, etc. (Bell 1991: 14), so we could say the overall rhetorical purpose is to inform the reader of newsworthy events. In terms of structure, journalists use a structure called ‘inverted pyramid’ or ‘climax first’ in articles (Bell, 1991: 169), whereby the most important facts are placed at the beginning. The first paragraph gives an overview of the whole article and the rest explains and expands on the beginning. This structure is useful in its generality but lacks specifics as to how different kinds of information in a news story relate to each other, what functions are fulfilled by different moves and strategies, and what they should be called. Fortunately, a more specific structure is provided by Bell that illustrates these relationships, presented in Figure 1.

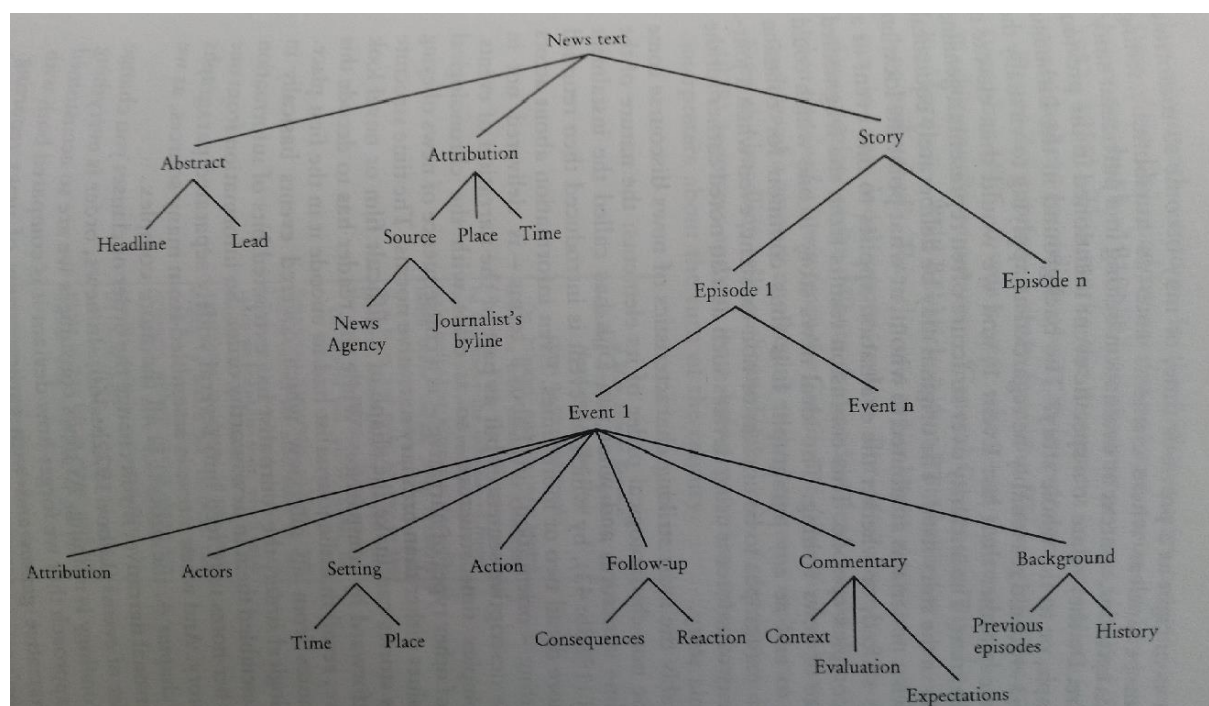


Figure 1: Structure of news texts (Bell, 1991:171).

Figure 1 depicts a structure of news texts that divides the news story into its constituent elements in terms of content and relates these elements to each other in a hierarchy. Once the rhetorical objective of news was identified on a general level, stories were divided into moves and strategies by identifying boundaries with a linguistic analysis and identifying functions with reference to the above structure along with news values. Once moves and strategies were

developed, they were applied to news stories, which presented challenges for assigning borders and functions as they were, at first, unclear. That, in turn, informed further refinement of moves and strategies. The refined categories were then applied to stories again, and the process took several such cycles until there were no more significant unclarities in borders or functions.

The linguistic methods for identifying moves consisted of paying attention to explicit text division devices, such as paragraph boundaries, quotations and headlines, and analyzing linguistic features of news articles. The linguistic features indicative of move boundaries are changes in modality and tense (e.g., ” [...] his condition *was* unknown Sunday afternoon. Authorities *are* searching for a shooter.”) and marked themes (“*Police* said that the child apparently was crossing the street [...] *At least* three similar accidents occurred Monday evening [...]”), as well as introduction of new lexical references (“*Neighbors* who witnessed three 13-year-old trick-or-treaters being killed by a hit-and-run driver [...] *Police* are looking for the driver and a passenger [...]”).

The reason why news values were also used as basis for identifying moves and strategies is that the content of structural features in news is partly informed by news values that determine newsworthiness (Bell 1991: 155-156). In other words, values determine what is considered newsworthy and what kinds of information is found in different parts of a news text. For example, if we consider that the most newsworthy things attract readers and that the function of the headline – the first element in a story – is to attract readers, it makes sense to have the most newsworthy thing in the first element of the story’s structure – the headline. This example illustrates a connection between function and structure that move analysis aims to point out. In terms of the aim of this thesis, which is to compare real and fake news, values are also important as they are the means by which a story can be judged biased or inaccurate (Bell 1991: 155-156) and they provide insight into the rationale behind writing and editing choices in the two genres. Considering news values in determining functions for moves and strategies also helps reduce the ambiguous nature of communicative purposes pointed out by Askehave and Swales (2000: 197).



## 4.2. Analytical issues

Meta-information and meta-text were not included in the analysis. Some stories in the data contain these, for example the following ending is included in FN15:

What do you think of these revelations from the Michigan recount effort? Please share this story on Facebook and tell us what you think because we want to hear YOUR voice!

The issue with meta-text is that most of it (e.g. all bylines) had already been removed from the data by its collectors – and the remaining bits are probably not there intentionally – so it is difficult to justify including them in the analysis while leaving out the rest. The previous example could only be included as a move if bylines and other meta-text were included as well and were given their own moves. Since most meta-text had already been removed, I decided to exclude the rest as well.

Another issue regarding move analysis itself is presented by Moreno & Swales as follows:

Furthermore, it still remains unclear which is the minimal formal unit for annotating moves-and-steps (cf. a proposition, in Connor & Mauranen, 1999; the sentence for moves and the phrase (or clause) for steps, in Cotos et al., 2015, Cotos et al., 2016; or a sentence or paragraph, in Crookes, 1986), and whether functional interpretation best proceeds top-down or bottom-up.

(Moreno & Swales, 2018: 41)

There seems to be no consensus on what the minimal unit of analysis should be. In this study, moves correspond to either individual or multiple sentences and paragraphs depending on what kinds of information they relate to the reader: the headline is an abstraction of the lead, which, in turn, is an abstraction of the move ‘story proper’, and the final move ‘additional information’ is not an abstraction at all and can be edited out without significantly affecting a story’s news value. On the level of strategies, the minimal unit of analysis is the phrase as they account for most expressions of news values, although some individual words such as “breaking” (as in *breaking news*) can do this too, but these are relatively rare. As Flowerdew (2002) points out, various interrelated levels of analysis are carried out at the same time in move analysis, so whether functional interpretation best proceeds top-down or bottom-up is not a significant theoretical

issue. In actuality, move analysis proceeds simultaneously top-down and bottom-up (Flowerdew, 2002: 95, in Moreno & Swales 2018: 41).

The following section presents the results of the analysis. Specific news stories are referred to in the following way: real news story, number one in the appendix = RN1, story two is RN2, fake news story number five is FN5, and so on. Strategies are color coded and the coding is explained as examples of them are used.

## 5. Analytical Results

This section covers the results of the move analysis. I will first give a general overview of the moves that were identified before describing them in more detail. Next, I will do the same for the strategies. I will then present a comparison of the moves of real news to moves of fake news before going on to compare the strategies in a similar way. The full analysis of the data is presented in the appendix.

Usually strategies are presented together with their respective moves as strategies are often seen as ways of realizing *a particular* move – that is to say, moves do not *usually* share strategies. However, all strategies in a news story – be it events, commentaries, backgrounds, follow-ups, source attributions – are governed by news values by which some ‘facts’ are judged more newsworthy than others (Bell 1991: 155). All strategies contribute to the overall communicative purpose of increasing the newsworthiness of a story, and they all serve to establish the point of view of a story. Therefore, some strategies are present in multiple (if not all) moves, and it is best to present them separately for clarity.

### 5.1. Moves

Four moves were identified for real news and five for fake news: ‘headline’, ‘lead’, ‘story proper’, and ‘additional information’. Fake news also contains ‘rant’ along with the previous ones. ‘Headline’ refers to the headline of a story, and ‘lead’ refers to the first (few) paragraph(s) that summarize the main event that is mentioned in the headline. These two are abstractions of the third move, ‘story proper’, which elaborates on the lead and the headline. The fourth move, ‘additional information’, provides additional information on the topic (as the name suggests), and

it can be edited out without leaving significant information out of the story. In real news, all moves appear in this order only and all except the final one are obligatory. However, ‘additional information’ could also be considered an obligatory move as it appears in all real news stories in the data, but it is strictly speaking not necessary in terms of news- or information value. In fake news, however, there is one story (appendix, FN13) that has no ‘additional information’, and another one (FN9) where ‘additional information’ appears before *and* after ‘story proper’, so the move seems to not be obligatory in fake news and it can also appear before ‘story proper’ (but nowhere else), meaning its order in the sequence of moves is not entirely fixed. The fifth move, called ‘rant’, is not shared by real news and seems to function as an expression of moral outrage towards a news actor or event. It appears in only two fake stories, meaning it is optional, and in both cases, it comes last, suggesting a fixed place in move order.

The rest of section 5.1. describes the moves found in real news. The move ‘rant’ will be discussed in section 5.3. where real and fake news are compared to each other.

#### 5.1.1. Headline

The headline is the first element of a news story. According to Bell (1991: 153), the most important information in a news story is presented first and the least important last. This structure is referred to as the ‘inverted pyramid’, whereby information is presented in a decreasing order of importance (Bell, 1991: 169). This means that the most attention grabbing, newsworthy details, events, people and actions, are placed in the headline. The communicative purposes of the headline are to attract the reader to read the story and to provide a summary of the story’s main events (Bell, 1991: 189).

Example 1: In Reversal, Gambian President Rejects Loss And Calls For New Election. RN1.

Example 2: No Government Shutdown: Senate Passes Funding Bill After Democrats Back Down. RN2.

Example 3: BREAKING – Trump DEFIES Obama, Tells Americans What Obama is Doing Behind the Scene. FN1.

Example 4: BREAKING BOMBSHELL: NYPD Blows Whistle on New Hillary Emails: Money Laundering, Sex Crimes with Children, Child Exploitation, Pay to Play, Perjury. FN2.

Examples 1-2 are real news headlines and 3-4 are fake news. Bell describes headlines as “abstracts of abstracts” (Bell, 1991: 150), meaning that they are abstractions of the lead which itself abstracts the rest of the story. The length of a headline is dictated by page layout, meaning that it is not written by the journalist who writes the story but by a subeditor instead (Bell, 1991: 186). However, I cannot say if this is the case for fake news as well.

### 5.1.2. Lead

The lead is the first couple of sentences that begin a news story. It summarizes the central action and establishes the main point of the story (Bell, 1991: 149). It is the nucleus of evaluation in news because it establishes the story’s point of view (Bell 1991: 152).

Bell (1991: 176) considers leads “the most distinctive feature of news discourse”. They are packed with information and news appeal while trying to be as short and clear as possible (Bell, 1991: 183). The lead is, in essence, a one-paragraph story that differs from the headline in that it begins the news story while also summarizing it. Bell (1991: 152) emphasizes the importance of the lead:

Until a journalist finds what to lead a story with, the story remains unfocused. It is an article but not a story, and may be rejected or rewritten by editors on those grounds. On the other hand, once the journalist decides what the lead is, the rest of the story often falls into place below it. If no good lead can be found, the material may be rejected altogether as a non-story.

Here are some examples:

Example 5: After publicly conceding electoral defeat last week, President Yahya Jammeh of Gambia has reversed course and is calling for a new election. RN1.

Example 6: Senate Democrats dropped their objections Friday night to a short-term-funding bill to keep the government running, and the bill passed less than an hour before the midnight deadline. RN2.

The examples above are leads connected to the previous headlines in examples one and two. Notice how example 5 restates example 1 in different words but giving it a little more context, explaining the meaning of “in reversal” mentioned in the headline.

### 5.1.3. Story Proper

This move adds detail to the lead, developing the story. This detail is relevant to the lead and the headline and removing it may cut out important information. News is written in the order 'lead-body-headline' (Bell, 1991: 186), so the 'story proper' is an unpacked, more detailed version of the lead. It may contain new information (i.e. an event not mentioned earlier in the story), but newsworthiness dictates this information is considered less important than what has already been reported.

Unlike in personal narrative, where the course of events follows actions and their consequences, this order is reversed in news: the newest events come first and consequences are presented before the action (Bell, 1991: 153). Sometimes the order of events in news may be difficult to follow because it is not chronological. Something van Dijk (1988: 43) calls "the instalment method" where an event is introduced and then returned to in more detail two or more times may also be used and can make following the order of events even harder. This is all due to news following news values instead of narrative norms (Bell, 1991: 172). In other words, newsworthiness dictates the order of content within the move, as is the case in all other moves, but it is most noticeable here as the move is often considerably longer than the previous two.

The communicative purpose at play in this move is to give details about the main news event, actor, action, and sometimes time and place as well. Here is an example of a 'story proper' from a real news story (RN5):

Example 7:

*[Headline]* **New Zealand's Parliament chooses new prime minister** *[End of Headline]*

*[Lead]* Bill English, New Zealand's finance minister and a former farmer, will be sworn in as the country's 39th prime minister on Monday after his colleagues in the Parliament chose him as their new leader. *[End of Lead]*

*[Story Proper]* English emerged victorious from a meeting of the conservative National Party caucus. Two other candidates for the job withdrew last week after English gained more support than them. He is to be officially sworn in on Monday afternoon.

His ascension from deputy prime minister follows the surprise resignation last week of John Key after eight years as prime minister.

Key was a popular leader and was expected to contest a fourth straight election next year. But he said he wanted to leave while he was on top and to spend more time with his wife and two children. *[End of Story Proper]* RN5.

Example 7 illustrates how ‘story proper’ is related to the previous moves with clear indicators of move boundary. The same information is repeated in all the moves but is expanded on as the story progresses.

#### 5.1.4. Additional Information

This move provides additional information on the story proper and/or the greater subject matter of a news story, such as politics. It is not necessarily relevant to the headline or lead and contains the least important information in the story. It can be used to demonstrate a story’s relevance in the light of a greater societal discourse, or to answer the question: “so what?” Here is the rest of the story on the appointment of New Zealand’s new prime minister. Notice how the significance of the appointment of Bill English is presented by relating his background and future plans to New Zealand’s economy:

*[Additional Information]* English, 54, has degrees in commerce and literature. He has been praised for his handling of the country’s economy in his role as finance minister.

A practicing Roman Catholic, English has been a politician for 26 years, after he was first elected to the parliament in 1990. He had a previous unsuccessful stint as party leader, taking his party to a big election defeat in 2002. He said he’s gained wisdom and experience since then.

“I was 39 years old then, with six children under 13,” he said last week. “So if nothing else, I’ve got the opportunity to focus much more on the job now.”

Under English, New Zealand has been enjoying relatively robust annual GDP growth of more than 3 percent and the unemployment rate has fallen below 5 percent. English has also managed to return small surpluses on the government’s books over the past couple of years.

English said he will deliver tax cuts and spread the country’s growing wealth to where it is needed. *[End of Additional Information]* RN5.

Also notice that although this additional information is relevant to the lead and the headline, it can be removed in its entirety without affecting our understanding that the NZ parliament has chosen a new PM – it merely tells us more about who he is. Removing this move also would not make the story less newsworthy. Likewise, more such information could be added without making the story more newsworthy. According to Bell (1991: 172): “The ideal news story is one which could be cut to end at any paragraph.” Unlike in personal narrative where the climax or the

resolution of a story is saved for the end, in news it is presented first as it has more news value (Bell, 1991: 152-154). The result of this is that news often appears to “finish in mid-air” (Bell, 1991: 154). This is because the journalist might not know what editors decide to cut out, and the cutting out is done from the bottom up, so one cannot leave anything important to the end (Bell, 1991: 154).

Unlike the other moves, this one is not based on Bell’s (1991) structure of news stories. However, I believe it is distinct enough from ‘story proper’ and the other moves to merit its own move as it differs from the rest in terms of communicative purpose and function, and its move boundary is always marked by a paragraph change text-wise and a topic change content-wise.

#### 5.1.5. Other potential moves

An argument could be made that there is one last move – ‘closure’ – the purpose of which is to explicitly end a story and/or engage the reader in some way. Examples of this can be found in a couple of fake news stories in the data, and it is possible similar ones are used in real news, although there are none among the news I analyzed:

Example 8: ABC news will continue to bring you updated news involving the Capitol Hill shooting as information comes to light. FN4.

Example 9: If you have any questions about the recount or the special December 19th election, you can call the Obama administration’s special election hotline at (785) 273-0325. FN6.

Example 10: C) What do you think of these revelations from the Michigan recount effort? Please share this story on Facebook and tell us what you think because we want to hear YOUR voice! FN15.

However, I have not included these as a move because they are not part of the news story itself but are instead a type of meta-text that focuses outside the story’s content either on the story itself or on the reader. My analysis is focused only on the content and structure of the news story itself, and all meta-text, such as bylines, links, picture captions, etc., have been excluded from the analysis, so the inclusion of these as a move would be difficult to justify. Most of the meta-text has already been removed from the data by its collectors, and the previous examples, along with a few remaining links, are probably not left there on purpose.

## 5.2. Strategies

Although most moves are shared between real and fake news, there are major differences in the way they are realized, i.e. in their strategies. I have identified a total of six strategies that are employed in news writing. Their aim (or communicative purpose) is to present certain kinds of information to increase the newsworthiness of a story. They also inform the reader of things such as: What newsworthy events have happened? What is their significance? What is to follow from these events? Where does the information come from? And so on. However, one should keep in mind that there is always a point of view in a story. While some ‘facts’ are given, others may be left out, and it is a major part of a copy editor’s work to maximize the news value of a story by making “[...] the lead ‘harder’ and more striking, the source’s credentials more authoritative, the writing more crisp, the appeal to the audience more compelling” (Bell, 1991: 79).

Newsworthiness and establishment of a point of view are therefore considered the basis for the following strategies:

- A) Reporting an event
- B) Providing commentary
- C) Providing details
- D) Providing background
- E) Attributing the source
- F) Providing a follow-up

### 5.2.1. Reporting an event

The first strategy to conveying information and newsworthiness in news is reporting an event that has happened. This strategy conveys the main action in a story and is obligatory in all headlines and leads and may appear in all other moves as optional. Events consist of one or more actors and actions, i.e. someone saying or doing something, and optionally a time and a place, and more than one event can be reported in a move.

Examples of ‘reporting an event’:

**Yellow** = Event (Actor, action, time, place) [Reports a newsworthy event, the main action]



**Red** = Commentary (Context, evaluation, expectations) [Establishes a point of view or the significance of the story. Observations, comparisons, expectations, etc.]

Example 11: Donald Trump said again on Sunday that he is “open-minded” about climate change -- but also that “nobody really knows” the truth about the issue, which contradicts the fact that there is near-universal scientific agreement on the issue. RN4.

Example 12: With House lawmakers already back home for the holidays on Friday — and zero interest from GOP leaders to reopen negotiations — Democrats backed down in time to avert a midnight Friday shutdown. RN2.

Actors are often political figures, officials, celebrities, or other ‘elite’ persons, as in examples 11 and 12, and events are often them saying something, or non-elite people doing something or being done to (Bell, 1991: 194). Example 11 is from a lead and 12 is from ‘story proper’.

Actor, action, time and place form the journalist’s *who*, *what*, *when* and *where*; the basic facts that concentrate at the beginning of a story (Bell, 1991: 151). They relate to the news values of *eliteness*, *recency* and *proximity*. *Eliteness* means that news values actors who are important, e.g. politicians (Bell, 1991: 158). Elite actors have more news value than non-elite ones (Bell, 1991: 151), for example, a President’s words or actions are more important than your neighbor’s. *Recency* as a value means that something that only just happened has more news value than something that happened ages ago (Bell, 1991: 156). *Proximity* means that something that happens either close to the reader or in a similar place (e.g. in another Western country for Westerners) has more news value than something that happens far away (Bell, 1991: 157). The strategy ‘reporting an event’ is used to express these values early on in a news story to contribute to the communicative purposes of the headline and the lead to catch readers’ attention and to convey the main information of the story. In ‘story proper’ and ‘additional information’ it can be used to present developments that are part of the main event, or other events that relate to the main event but are not directly a part of it and do not warrant their own news story.

### 5.2.2. Providing commentary

The second strategy to conveying information and newsworthiness is providing commentary. It establishes a point of view or the significance of the story by providing context, evaluation, expectations, observations and comparisons. Commentary is often used to explicitly state the significance of the news event and it is the most versatile strategy because it can contribute to newsworthiness by expressing many different news values: *novelty*, *unexpectedness*, *superlativeness*, *relevance*, *negativity*, *consonance* and *personalization*.

*Novelty* refers to the inherent news value that new things have over old ones (Bell, 1991: 157). *Unexpectedness*, on the other hand, means that the unpredictable and the rare have more news value than the routine (Bell, 1991: 157). *Superlativeness* means that extreme events are more likely to be covered in news than non-extreme ones; the opening of the biggest building or the most violent crime is likely to get news coverage (Bell, 1991: 157). Commentary can also be used to point out how *relevant* something is to the reader: a political decision that means more money for the ordinary citizen is seen as having more news value than something abstract they cannot relate to (Bell, 1991: 157-158). This is very similar to the value of *personalization* which states that things that can be pictured in personal terms have more news value than concepts, processes, the generalized or the mass (Bell, 1991: 158). Commentary can also emphasize *consonance* or “compatibility with preconceptions about the social group or nation from which the news actors come” (Bell, 1991: 157). For example, a technology-related story from Japan could be seen as more newsworthy than a similar story from Brazil because Japan is stereotypically known for its technology, whereas a story related to soccer could be more newsworthy if it had something to do with Brazil instead. Finally, *negativity* is what some might call ‘the basic news value’ (Bell, 1991: 156). Damage, injury, death, disaster, accident and war make good news, and commentary can emphasize the negative aspects of a news event to make it seem more significant and newsworthy.

Examples of ‘providing commentary’:

**Yellow** = Event **Red** = Commentary **Green** = Source attribution **Gray** = Detail

Example 13, commentary in a headline:

**BREAKING BOMBSHELL: NYPD Blows Whistle on New Hillary Emails: Money Laundering, Sex Crimes with Children, Child Exploitation, Pay to Play, Perjury** FN2.

Example 14, commentary at the beginning of ‘story proper’:

It's become a familiar year-end act for Congress: passing a short-term-funding bill that will keep the government running for a few more months. This funding measure, which passed 63-36, runs out in April. RN2.

Example 15, commentary at the end of ‘additional information’:

He needs to be more forthcoming this time around. If he's got the evidence, show it. Certainly none of us would be surprised to learn that Obama is behind ISIS, it's already well known. We would like to put our hands on his proof, though, in order to properly charge Obama and convict him. FN9.

Example 16, commentary as a quote:

"Would I have preferred that provision to be more generous? Of course I would have," said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. "But we'll be back at it in April, and I think it's highly unlikely that we'll take it away." RN2.

The examples above demonstrate various uses of ‘providing commentary’. It can be used in any move but is used most often in ‘additional information’ to demonstrate the relevance of the story, but it is not an obligatory strategy. In fact, this strategy seems to be completely optional: two stories in the data, RN3 and RN13, do not contain any commentary but merely report what a news actor has said by presenting it as newsworthy and backing it up with direct quotes.

### 5.2.3. Providing details

The third strategy is called ‘providing details’, marked gray in example 14 above. It provides concrete details about things, events, people or places, e.g. definitions, names, dates, locations, numbers, sums of money. It primarily functions to establish *facticity* which is described by Bell

as “the degree to which a story contains the kinds of facts and figures on which hard news thrives” (Bell, 1991: 158), the assumption being that clear facts and figures such as “one million dollars” make a story more newsworthy than abstractions like “some money”. As I rely on the ground truth established by the data and therefore have not done any fact checking myself, I make no claims as to whether a ‘detail’ is true or not and refrain from calling them “facts”, even though the term is more fitting. In the analysis, similar things have been marked ‘details’ in both real and fake news. The strategy is completely optional and can be used in any move, but it is not used in real news headlines (although there seems to be no particular reason why the strategy could not be used, they are simply missing from the data). The strategy is used in one fake news headline.

Providing *facticity* is not the only communicative purpose of the strategy: it also aims to create *unambiguity*, because a clear-cut story that has no if’s or but’s is favored to an ambiguous one (Bell, 1991: 157). Newsworthiness is also increased by *superlativeness*, meaning that figures are better the bigger they come: a theft of a million dollars is bigger news than someone stealing a fiver.

Example 17, ‘providing detail’:

Gray = Detail Blue = Background

Weiner maintained little known email accounts that the couple shared on the website [anthonyweiner.com](http://anthonyweiner.com). Weiner, a former seven-term Democratic Congressman from New York, primarily used that domain to campaign for Congress and for his failed mayoral bid of New York City. FN2.

The difference between ‘detail’ and ‘event’ is that ‘detail’ is a description; a matter-of-factly statement about the nature of something, as in example 17, whereas ‘event’ is an action or a “happening”, and it differs from ‘commentary’ by containing little to no evaluation.

#### 5.2.4. Providing background

The communicative purpose of ‘providing background’ is to increase newsworthiness by placing an event in a chain of events. It is similar to providing context via commentary, but its function is more specific. It relates a news event to a previous event that precedes the one currently reported, like this:

Example 18: After publicly conceding electoral defeat last week, President Yahya Jammeh of Gambia has reversed course and is calling for a new election. RN1.

Here, the event “reversing course and calling for a new election” in yellow is related to the previous event “publicly conceding electoral defeat” that happened earlier. The strategy can increase newsworthiness by expressing *consonance* e.g. by presenting a previous event that is compatible with a preconception about a social group or a nation, or it can express *proximity* by making a connection to an event that happened nearby or in a similar country. These values, like all the ones mentioned previously, focus on *content*. This strategy, however, also expresses two values related to news *process*: *continuity* and *co-option*. *Continuity* means that a story refers to an event that has been news before (“news breeds news”) (Bell, 1991: 159), like the concession of electoral defeat. Demonstrating this continuity can be used to increase a story’s news value (Bell, 1991: 159). Another way to increase news value is *co-option*, which means that a story that is only tangentially related to a more high-profile story or event can gain news value through association (Bell, 1991: 159). For example, ‘providing background’ can be used to connect a story on a new construction project to climate change, or a local dispute to a major conflict, and increase news value that way. The data contains no examples of this strategy being used in headlines, but it can be used in any other move as optional.

#### 5.2.5. Attributing the source

Source attribution is an important strategy and has many functions that are distinct from the rest of the strategies. ‘Attributing the source’ increases news value by demonstrating that a story’s sources are legitimate and elite. Not unlike the value of *eliteness*, according to which high-profile news actors are valued, *attribution* is the tendency to value high-profile sources, especially socially validated authorities and people affiliated with organizations and institutions (Bell, 1991: 158). When a story’s sources are clear and impeccable, it also increases its newsworthiness by being *unambiguous* (Bell, 1991: 157). Sources can also increase a story’s news value by being exclusive and providing an angle to an issue that other outlets have missed (Bell, 1991: 159).

The simplest use of ‘attributing the source’ is to state a source explicitly, as in examples 19 and 20:

Example 19: The questionnaire, obtained by CBS News and first reported by Bloomberg News, asks, for example, [...] RN4.

Example 20: [...] Lankford tweeted Sunday, RN6.

'Attributing the source' is also used as a direct quotation when it is preceded or followed by an 'event', a 'follow-up' or a 'commentary' that provides a point of view and interprets the quote it is associated with, like in examples 21 and 22 below:

Yellow = Event Red = Commentary Green = Source attribution Purple = Follow-up

Example 21: He also said there were other irregularities and problems in the electoral process.

"Our investigations reveal that in some cases, voters were told that the opposition has already won and there was no need for them to vote," Jammeh said, RN1.

Example 22: Opposition leader Mai Ahmad Fatty urged calm. "We are working round the clock to restore sanity," he told the AP. "We have the full support of our people. The world is with us." RN1.

In 21, the quote in green is given as a source for the claim 'he said there were other irregularities and problems in the electoral process'. Similarly, in 22, the follow-up claims the opposition leader urged calm and the quote is a speech act where he does so. Source attribution is used in 21 as proof to a claim and as support for an interpretation in 22. The difference between 'attributing the source' and 'commentary' or 'background' is the communicative purpose of providing proof. When a quote is not used as proof, it can be something other than 'source attribution'. The specific difference between quotes that are attribution and quotes that are commentary is that commentary contains a new POV or new information, whereas attribution is either explicitly a source or it tells what was reported in other words.

Proof has a particular use for news outlets, even though truth is certainly valuable in itself: it helps avoid potential libel suits and distance the outlet from the source (Bell, 1991: 207-208). The quote is valued because it is "a particularly incontrovertible fact because it is the newsmaker's own words" and it is "strong evidence in the potential libel suit which is always lurking in the journalist's subconscious, especially if the quote is on tape and can be played back" (Bell, 1991: 207-208). It also serves to absolve the journalist and the news outlet from endorsement of what the source said (Bell, 1991: 208). The function of source attribution as proof makes it particularly

tricky for use in fake news, and provides a valuable tool in identifying them, as will be demonstrated later in the thesis.

Source attribution is an important strategy in news, but although Bell (1991: 169) so greatly emphasizes its significance as part of a news story's structure, it does not seem to be obligatory for any particular move – there apparently only needs to be some source attribution somewhere in the text. The strategy can be used in any move. In the data, all 'additional information' -moves in real news contain source attribution, but this does not necessarily mean the strategy is obligatory – there may well be stories that do not contain it, similarly to some fake news stories in the data that do not. It can therefore be concluded that the strategy is optional, but its use is highly encouraged.

#### 5.2.6. Providing a follow-up

The final strategy is called 'providing a follow-up'. It increases the news value of a story by emphasizing the significance of an event through its consequences. Follow-ups cover “any action subsequent to the main action of an event” and involve verbal and non-verbal reactions to an event (Bell, 1991: 170). Whereas 'background' relates a story to a sequence of past events, 'follow-up' tells us what happened after the reported event.

Example 23, 'providing a follow-up' as direct speech:

“All this 'news' of Russian hacking: it has been going on for years. Serious, but hardly news,” Cornyn tweeted Saturday. RN6.

Example 24, 'follow-up' as indirect speech:

English said he will deliver tax cuts and spread the country's growing wealth to where it is needed. (not preceded or followed by quotation) RN5.

Example 25, 'follow-up' as speech act followed by quotation:

The Obama regime, however, has denied allegations that it was behind the resolution. “We did not draft this resolution; we did not introduce this resolution. We made this decision when it came up for a vote,” Obama deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes said Friday. FN5.

Example 26, ‘follow-up’ as an event:

Wire services report the streets of the capital Banjul were calm Saturday, with a heavy presence of police and soldiers. Gambians closed down shops and stayed home out of fear of violence. RN1.

Indirect speech, as shown in example 24, is the preferred reporting method, because it lets journalists focus the story and combine information from scattered parts of an interview (Bell, 1991: 209). The strategy may be used to frame a story in a particular way, not unlike ‘commentary’, but the point of view it provides comes from a news actor, not the journalist. ‘Providing a follow-up’ can increase news value through emphasizing *negativity*, *unambiguity*, *relevance*, or almost any other news value mentioned earlier, making it a very versatile strategy. The strategy is optional but is only used in ‘story proper’ and ‘additional information’ in real news. One fake news ‘lead’ and ‘story proper’ also contain a follow-up. In most instances of ‘follow-up’ found in the data, it is either immediately preceded or followed by quotation.

Interestingly, a lack of reaction can also be considered a follow-up when it is perceived significant. The following example is from RN6 – a story on Russian interference in US elections. For context, I have included the headline (in bold), the lead, and the first paragraph of ‘story proper’ before the follow-up:

Yellow = Event Red = Commentary Blue = Background Gray = Detail Purple = Follow-up

Example 27: **Key GOP senators join call for bipartisan Russia election probe, even as their leaders remain mum**

Two Senate Republicans joined demands for a bipartisan probe into Russia’s suspected election interference allegedly designed to bolster Donald Trump as questions continue to mount about the president-elect’s expected decision to nominate a secretary of state candidate with close ties to Russia.

Sens. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) — the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee — joined calls by incoming Senate Democratic leader Charles E. Schumer (N.Y.) and Armed Services ranking Democrat Jack Reed (R.I.) for a thorough, bipartisan investigation of Russian influence in the U.S. elections. Their statement came two days after The Washington Post reported the CIA’s private conclusion that Russia’s activities were intended to tip the scales to help Trump.



[...]

For the most part, other key Republicans were silent on the issue of whether to embrace a bipartisan look at whether Putin's government was behind the hacks of the Democratic National Committee emails and their publication by WikiLeaks in an alleged bid to help Trump and damage Hillary Clinton's campaign. RN6.

The 'follow-up' reports a lack of response instead of reporting speech or actions like in examples 23-26. Presumably a response was considered warranted and its lack was therefore newsworthy enough to be mentioned.

### 5.3. Comparison of moves

15 real news stories and 15 fake ones were analyzed for this study. Both genres contain one story (RN6, FN2) that is significantly longer than the rest and include a subheading with another 'lead', 'story proper' and 'additional information', essentially making it two stories in one. Both extra stories follow the same structure as all real news articles. This means that there are sixteen instances of 'headline', 'lead', 'story proper' and 'additional information' in real news in total in the data. Fake news contains the same amount of 'headline', 'lead' and 'story proper' but there are only fifteen instances of 'additional information' along with two 'rants'. I will provide a general overview of the differences in moves between the genres before comparing the moves individually.

On a general level the two genres are quite similar, but some major structural differences can be found. Both genres have headlines, leads, stories proper and additional information, and they all serve the same or similar functions, but stories FN13 and FN9 deviate from the others in their structure. FN13 has no 'additional information' and instead finishes with a rant spanning the final three sentences, so we can conclude the move is not obligatory in fake news. FN9, on the other hand, contains a long commentary after the lead that elaborates on the significance of the event reported in the headline and the lead. The commentary consists of paragraphs 2 and 3 and they are not, as one would expect, part of the move 'story proper', but instead of 'additional information' that is split in two. Two facts support this: the headline and the lead are not abstractions of the commentary in the second and third paragraphs but of the three paragraphs that come after it, numbers 4, 5 and 6, and the story would read like a typical news article

structure-wise if those paragraphs came instead after the lead, and the commentary was placed between number 6 and the final paragraph. Therefore paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 are the ones that form the move ‘story proper’ instead of paragraphs 2 and 3, and 2 and 3 are part of ‘additional information’, forming an unusual structure in news. As we can see, move order is more flexible in FN9 as ‘additional information’ appears both before *and* after ‘story proper’, so the placement of ‘additional information’ in the sequence of moves is not only optional in fake news but also not as fixed as it is in real news.

Another major difference is the move ‘rant’ that is not present in real news. It seems to function as an expression of outrage towards a news actor or event. It appears in only two fake stories, meaning it is optional, and in both cases, it comes last, suggesting a fixed place in move order. This is probably due to a necessity to first establish what the outrage is about before expressing it. The move is found in stories FN1 and FN13. Here is an example from the latter one:

Example 27: What the Hell, Obama? Are you trying to help ISIS or are you just that stupid?

Seriously, we have been pumping weapons into the Middle East for decades and look where it has gotten us! It’s time to STOP!!

Hopefully Trump will make it in time to put a stop to this nonsense and save America from 10 more years of WAR. FN13.

What sets ‘rant’ apart from ‘additional information’ is that it is not a sincere attempt at providing valuable analysis or information but is an expression of outrage instead, as the cursing and exclamations in example 27 show. Whereas Bell (1991: 194) describes news as elite people talking and non-elite people doing or being done to, in fake news, it can be the journalist him/herself who does the talking. ‘Rant’ gives the journalist a considerable voice in respect to the actual news event. This also makes ‘rant’ a structurally significant move: opinions are given such importance that Bell’s (1991: 172) idea that “the ideal news story is one which could be cut to end at any paragraph” seems not to apply to stories that contain ‘rant’ as it cannot simply be left out without altering the story’s content, point of view, and expressed values significantly. This can be seen in FN13 as it is so short, and the headline and the lead are so opinionated, that removing opinions from the story leaves almost nothing left. Therefore, I would argue that expression of outrage is a major communicative purpose at play in this story, and an argument

could be made that the move is of such importance that it is obligatory in this particular story. If that were the case, however, and there were some fake news stories that had obligatory ‘rants’ and some that didn’t, it could indicate that fake news could be divided into subgenres based on how explicitly opinionated they are. However, the data contains too few examples of ‘rants’ that I dare not make such generalizations based on that move alone, but the analysis of strategies below seems to support this. The analysis suggests that there is at least a major subgenre of fake news that can be identified by its information structure. This is discussed in more detail in section 6.

Discussion.

There are also differences in terms of other individual moves. Horne & Adali’s (2017: 5) finding that fake news tends to have a long headline crammed with information seems to be correct: real news headlines in the data are 11 words long on average with the shortest ones being 7 words long and longest 16 words long. Fake news headlines are longer with 13 words on average and shortest ones being 8 words and the longest 21 words long. The headline in FN2 is a good example of why this is: a lot of claims are crammed into a small space and exclamations such as “breaking bombshell” are often used in an artificial way of increasing newsworthiness:

Example 28: BREAKING BOMBSHELL: NYPD Blows Whistle on New Hillary Emails: Money Laundering, Sex Crimes with Children, Child Exploitation, Pay to Play, Perjury  
FN2.

Out of the 16 fake news headlines 8 contain exclamations like “breaking” but none of the real news do. Fake news headlines also differ from real news in that the headline might not accurately represent the contents of a story. Headlines of FN1 and FN10 are particularly misleading. Here is the headline and the lead from FN10:

Police Just Raided Democrat HQ! What They Found Was Nasty...

Voters on the right have been waiting for this for a long time! Police have finally raided a Democratic strategic headquarters, and the results are devastating!

The claim that something “nasty” or “devastating” was found is made in the headline and the lead, but what the story actually reports is that the Democratic HQ was raided, and agents were looking for evidence of voter fraud. No claims are made in the rest of the story that anything was actually found, but the way the headline and the lead present the story can give that impression to a reader who does not pay enough attention to wording.

There are also multiple problems with the headline of FN1: BREAKING – Trump DEFIES Obama, Tells Americans What Obama is Doing Behind the Scenes. First, unlike in real news where the most important information comes first, that is not the case here. Trump’s defiance is not the main point of the story – Obama’s behind-the-scenes activities are, and Trump himself has very little to do with the rest of the story. Secondly, the headline and the rest of the story contradict in who the main news actor is. The headline presents it as Trump, but it is actually Obama, as the second part of the lead shows, the actor underlined: “Obama’s massive ego and thin skin now has him publicly degrading Trump’s landslide Electoral College victory and diligently working behind the scenes to thwart the will of the people.” FN1.

A real news lead would also detail exactly how Trump defies Obama and the story would later quote Trump telling Americans what Obama is doing behind the scenes, but neither is done in the story. The reported act of defiance is also not something Trump does but just an interpretation of what he says in a tweet, which also happens to be the only source and act of source attribution in the whole story. None of the claims of what Obama is doing behind the scenes come from Trump, so the headline is incorrect in claiming they do. The headline also misrepresents the story as the story itself does not even claim that Trump is the source of any of its accusations; only the headline says so and no precise claims are attributed to Trump. It seems, then, that fake news headlines differ from real news in that there can be many inaccuracies in how the headline, lead, and story proper reflect each other and how the headline represents the story’s contents in fake news: source attributions or claims that should be repeated are not, or news actors are different in the headline and the rest of the story, or the most important information in a story is not presented first. However, the reason for the discrepancies is not obvious. It may have something to do with how real and fake news differ in terms of values. This topic is further explored in section 6: Discussion.

Leads also differ between the genres in terms of content and structure. They seem to be longer in fake news, contain more evaluation, and consist of more than one paragraph more often than in RN. RN leads are often 20-40 words, whereas FN leads are 60-90 words. However, short fake news may have even shorter leads than their RN counterparts: FN7 lead is only 13 words long. RN leads in the data are also one paragraph and about two sentences long, whereas a third of FN leads are two paragraphs at least. A reason for these differences might be that leads in real news

are packed with information and news appeal while trying to be as short and clear as possible (Bell, 1991: 183), and writing such leads is not an easy task. Bell suggests that the lead is the most difficult aspect of news writing for non-journalists to produce, and that the lead is the most distinguishing feature of news writing (1991: 176), so it could be that people with greater journalistic skill are employed by outlets with higher journalistic standards, and therefore as the lead is the most difficult part of the story to write and requires more skill, the leads that better fit the description of a good lead (short, clear and informative) are found in real news. Although this explanation seems logical, it might not necessarily be the case, or it might be only part of the reason, so I cannot say for sure. A difference in news values could provide another explanation.

The moves ‘story proper’ and ‘additional information’ have partly been discussed already with the cases FN9 and FN13 earlier, but some general points can still be made. The genres are not significantly different in terms of overall structure when it comes to these moves, except for the cases with FN9 and FN13 mentioned earlier. ‘Story proper’ is around three paragraphs long in both genres, while short one-paragraph instances and much longer six-paragraph ones can also be found in both, and in both genres, the move functions similarly by unpacking what is said in the headline and the lead, while some inconsistencies can be found in fake news. ‘Additional information’ varies similarly in length in both genres, begins with a shift in topic or focus, and likewise contains little-to-no essential information. One last curious case found among fake news is the story FN8 that has a long ‘lead’ and a short ‘story proper’. Usually ‘story proper’ is much longer than the lead, but here their length is the same. Another oddity is that the main action summarized in the lead is not elaborated on in ‘story proper’: the elaboration is “outsourced” to a compilation of various social media sites listed in an ‘attribution’ that begins the ‘story proper’. The assumption that readers want to dig up all the details themselves, especially when there are multiple sources to go through, is unusual in both genres, and it is odd the writer chose to provide speculation instead of more facts in the rest of the story, assuming of course that the social media sites provide any facts to begin with.

## 5.4. Comparison of strategies

The previous section outlined the major differences between the genres on the level of moves, so we still need to consider differences on the level of strategies, i.e. in the various ways the moves can be realized. Tables 2 & 3 below show how the use of strategies is distributed among the moves.

Moves/Strategies Real News	Headline	Lead	Story Proper	Additional Information
Event	16	16	22	45
Commentary	2	2	25	50
Detail	-	1	12	28
Background	-	1	18	18
Attribution	1	3	41	60
Follow-up	-	-	6	26

Table 2: Real news strategies

Moves/Strategies Fake News	Headline	Lead	Story Proper	Additional Information	Rant
Event	16	18	25	34	1
Commentary	9	14	19	39	8
Detail	1	4	5	8	-
Background	-	4	9	10	2
Attribution	2	6	41	34	-
Follow-up	-	3	5	6	-

Table 3: Fake news strategies

### 5.4.1. Differences in distribution

As you can see, the strategies are unevenly distributed among the moves. This is partly due to some moves being longer than others – generally headline-lead-story proper-additional information is also in order of length – but also moves serve different functions, so it makes sense there is variation in terms of strategies used. While some stories are longer than others and some moves are also longer than other moves, strategies are roughly the same length in all moves – one or two sentences – except for attribution which can be done in a few words, so it also makes sense that the longest moves contain the highest amount of strategies. While all strategies are used in some moves, this is not necessarily the case for any particular story: there are plenty of

stories that are missing a strategy or two, e.g. contain no ‘follow-ups’ or ‘details’. RN3, for example, contains only one instance of ‘background’ and the rest are ‘events’ followed by ‘attributions’. Notable differences between the two genres are that both the amount and length of commentaries is greater in fake news (89 vs 79 instances) even though fake news stories are shorter on average (506 words vs 640), and ‘additional information’ contains half as much attribution in fake news than in real news. The total amount of ‘details’, ‘backgrounds’, and ‘follow-ups’ is also greater in real news.

Strategies contribute to the following three elements of the moves: their information value, newsworthiness, and point of view. While all strategies contribute to newsworthiness, events, details and attributions contribute mostly to information value, while commentaries provide a point of view, and backgrounds and follow-ups provide a bit of both, generally speaking.

Looking at tables 2 and 3 above, we can observe that strategies that focus on information value and facticity are utilized more often in real news than they are in fake news, and likewise point-of-view and opinion focused strategies are used more in fake news than real news. Compared to real news, there is a heavy focus on commentary especially at the beginning of a fake news story. Some stories contain multiple instances of ‘commentary’ in the lead, and 33% of FN stories start with it. They preface the story with an often emotional and negative point of view, which in part supports the notion put forward by Horne & Adali (2017: 1) that “[...] fake news is targeted for audiences who are not likely to read beyond titles and is aimed at creating mental associations between entities and claims”. Stories from FN11 to FN15 are good examples of the creation of mental associations as their leads begin with a short commentary that sets the tone for the rest of the story, as in the following example:

Example 29: This is really one of those funny, beautiful moments in history when a big, old, and unreliable news source like the Washington Post gets caught red handed in their own web of lies. FN14.

The use of emotive language is clear as “getting caught red-handed” is seen as “funny” and “beautiful” and the triplet “big, old, and unreliable” is used to describe the Washington Post, as if justice had just been served to an evil-doer. The fact that a story begins with such a statement (and a third of FN stories in the data do the same) suggests importance of feelings over factuality, and an argument could be made that such leads make no attempts at persuasion but try to connect

with readers who feel the same, as Horne & Adali (2017) suggest. Such intros to leads are not found in real news in the data.

The distribution of ‘events’ favors fake news early in stories and real news at the end. ‘Lead’ contains two more events and ‘story proper’ three more in FN than in RN, meaning FN leads have 11.2% more ‘events’ and ‘stories proper’ have 13.6% more ‘events’ than in RN, but ‘additional information’ contains 11 (32.35%) more ‘events’ in RN. Again, this might be indicative of a tendency in FN to make most newsworthy claims early in the story and save the final move for opinionated discussion. However, ‘additional information’ is generally shorter in FN than in RN, so it is hard to say how much of the differences here are due to how fake news works and how much they are due to the length of stories; perhaps the distribution would be more similar if FN stories were longer. However, differences between the genres are still great in this respect when we look at other strategies in a similar way: the final move in real news contains four times as many ‘follow-ups’, almost four times as many ‘details’, twice as many ‘attributions’, and almost twice as many ‘backgrounds’ than FN. The difference in the amount of strategies that focus on factuality is so great that this likely indicates that real news offers a more fact-based discussion on the greater subject matter of a story and a less opinionated analysis of the significance of the main news event than fake news, being that the greater subject matter and significance of events are the topic/function of ‘additional information’.

One last thing to point about distribution is that there are no ‘follow-ups’ in RN leads, whereas there are three in FN. This might be due to a small sample size and it is possible the strategy could sometimes be used in real news leads as well, or it might be because such information is cut out in real news as leads need to be short. Nevertheless, the distribution data shows that both ‘detail’ and ‘follow-up’ are primarily ‘additional information’ strategies in real news, whereas a clear bias towards usage in a particular move is not apparent in fake news. A likely reason for this bias in real news is that these two strategies are well suited to serve the communicative purpose of ‘additional information’ to discuss the greater subject matter and significance of reported events by providing relevant facts about them and connecting them to previous events. The possibility that fake news tends to become more opinionated towards the end also exists and could explain some of the differences in distribution.



### 5.4.2. Differences in use per strategy

The use of ‘event’ is often similar in both genres, at least in terms of function. It conveys the main information of the story, and in ‘story proper’ and ‘additional information’ it can be used to present developments that are part of the main event, or other events that relate to the main event but are not directly a part of it. The following example of a typical use of the strategy in RN comes from the lead of RN8:

Example 30: President-elect Donald Trump has asked Goldman Sachs executive Gary Cohn to head his White House national economic council, a group that coordinates economic policy across agencies, NBC News reported on Friday. RN8.

The strategy, shown in yellow, states what has happened in a matter-of-fact manner and is followed by an attribution with a possible interjection by another strategy – a ‘detail’ here. In fake news, attribution is rarer by 26.5.% overall and ‘events’ are often joined by commentary. Language can also be more evaluative and emotional, as in the example below:

Example 31: Today the Post was forced to add new “notes” to that article which essentially read that their list was crap and the source they claimed was reliable is actually just a bunch of Liberal morons. FN14.

Although the strategies have the same function, the underlined words and phrases show just how different their styles can be in terms of objectivity. Words such as ‘crap’ and ‘morons’ are emotive and indicative of the writer’s (strong) point of view. Such words are not found in real news, except perhaps as parts of direct quotes.

Commentaries also share a function in the two genres. They establish the point of view and the significance of a story by providing context, evaluation, expectations, observations and comparisons. However, there are differences in the way this is achieved. In addition to presenting a short commentary in the beginning of leads to establish a point of view (as noted above), fake news delves into the territory of personal commentary in the rest of the moves too:

Example 32: So, Liberals are adding further hate directed at an innocent family who are trying to support their transgender member. I thought liberals were supportive of transgender people? Apparently they only care about the hate directed at them if the transgender person agrees with their political views. FN11, Beginning of ‘additional information’.

About half of all FN commentary consists of similar personal accounts, and the move ‘rant’ is an extreme variant of this. The ‘rant’ in FN13 conveys outrage about a statement by Obama and proceeds by first presenting an event, attributing it to a statement by Obama, and moving on to rant about it, which appears a significant and deliberate part of the story. FN1, on the other hand, is peculiar as it does not seem to set out to rant like FN13, but instead seems to devolve into one as if it was written as stream-of-thought. Such impulsiveness is not found in RN and raises questions about FN editorial practices. Commentary in real news is more focused, objective, informative and impersonal:

Example 33: The bill runs through April to buy Congress more time to negotiate the fiscal year 2017 spending bills, because the Senate is expected to be consumed by the confirmation process for Trump administration nominees in the first quarter of next year. RN2, Beginning of ‘additional information’.

The role of opinions in fake news commentary is significant, which is not only evident in the rants in FN1 and FN13, or in the odd placement of ‘additional information’ in FN9, but in the explicit opinions presented in half the stories in the data: FN1, FN7, FN9, FN10, FN11, FN13, FN14, and FN15. Commentaries in these stories contain explicit opinions that can be divided into four categories: 1) accusation (example 34), 2) addressing the news actor (example 35), 3) addressing the reader (example 36), and 4) statement of opinion in the first person (example 37).

Example 34: Liberals are nothing but a bunch of sore losers, and the fact that they would harass a young girl because of her choice to perform is sickening. The truth is, Liberals will direct their hatred at anyone if they can’t get their way. FN11.

Example 35: What the Hell, Obama? Are you trying to help ISIS or are you just that stupid? FN13.

Example 36: Let me break this down plain and simple for you folks. WaPo and other old news sources lost all of their Trust when they lied about the election this year. Of course, the problem goes even further back to when they LIED about Nukes being in Iraq. FN14.

Example 37: In my opinion, each of these staff members should be barred from working elections again. Whether through negligence or intention, something very bad has been going on here. FN15.

These categories of explicit opinion are not found in real news, so the claim that fake news is more opinionated than real news is not without merit. That is not to say, however, that real news is completely objective: on the contrary. The reason opinions and more fact-based context are

grouped together is that they both function to establish a point of view to a story. Even if journalists did not aim to do that, but instead tried to be as objective as possible, no story is exhaustive due to the limitations of the genre, e.g. space and time constraints and the need to be short, informative and easy to understand, so they must choose what facts to present, which necessarily means leaving other facts out, significantly affecting the point of view of a story. Finally, commentary is also used to explicitly state the significance of a news event, especially in headlines, but this is further explored below in relation to specific moves.

‘Details’ provide facticity and unambiguity in real and fake news alike. Their use is the same in both genres, firstly, as interjections to provide a definition (examples 38 and 39), and secondly, as full sentences to provide a description (examples 40 and 41):

Example 38, fake news: Weiner maintained little known email accounts that the couple shared on the website [anthonyweiner.com](http://anthonyweiner.com). Weiner, a former seven-term Democratic Congressman from New York, primarily used that domain to campaign for Congress and for his failed mayoral bid of New York City. FN2.

Example 39, real news: Adam Schiff, the leading Democrat on the House intelligence committee, said Trump “cannot abide the idea that Russian hacking helped his campaign” and was lashing out in a manner that undermined confidence in his handling of intelligence. RN9.

Example 40, fake news: YPG and PYD are Kurdish groups that Erdogan regards as terrorists operating against Turkey. FN9.

Example 41, real news: The poll of 1,000 registered voters, taken Wednesday through Sunday, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points. RN11.

As the function and use of the strategy is the same in both genres, the orientation of fake news towards evaluative and opinionated stories and of real news towards facticity and objectiveness is reflected in the distribution of the strategy between the genres: 18 overall in FN to 41 in RN.

There is also a ‘detail’ in a FN ‘headline’, which is a move that contains no details in real news, but this is also addressed in the next section below.

Like ‘event’ and ‘detail’, the strategies ‘background’ and ‘follow-up’ are used in the same way in both genres. The only noticeable difference is, again, in style, namely that the writer might address the reader directly in ‘background’ as the phrase “you see” in example 42 shows (but no examples of this are found in ‘follow-up’):

Example 42: You see, just last week the Washington Post published an article in which they claimed to have an actual list of news companies that work for Vladimir Putin FN14.

Finally, the use of attribution in fake news can differ greatly from real news. In real news, attribution is used to demonstrate that sources are legitimate and elite and to provide proof to claims, support for interpretations, and to distance the news outlet from the source. Some fake news, like FN3, FN4 and FN5, use it in a similar way, but there are others that do not. Some have problems demonstrating the legitimacy and eliteness of their sources, like the attribution in green in the following example:

Example 43: According to several reports, Haiti has been a nexus for child trafficking for a number of years. FN8.

The attribution in this example specifies nothing about the reports it mentions: who made them and when, where they can be found, etc. There is nothing to indicate the source is legitimate or elite. It functions as proof to a claim but comes across as untrustworthy due to lack of specifics. The same problem can be found in FN2, although its attempts at presenting its sources as legitimate and elite are better:

Example 44: Meanwhile, FBI sources said Abedin and Weiner were cooperating with federal agents, who have taken over the non-sexting portions the case from NYPD. The husband-and-wife Clinton insiders are both shopping for separate immunity deals, sources said. FN2.

Attributions to the NYPD and the FBI provide institutional legitimacy to the claims but they remain unspecific. In real news, sources are specified more clearly - even if they remain anonymous. The attribution in green below provides specifics on the person who gave the information, what news outlet interviewed them, and the time the interview took place:

Example 45: A congressional official with knowledge of the issue told NBC News on Saturday that the CIA has concluded that Russia mounted a covert intelligence operation to help Trump win the election. RN10.

It is common to leave government officials unnamed as they have institutional legitimacy to back them up, but otherwise the sources are named, or an explanation to their anonymity is provided, as in the final attribution here:

Example 46: A U.S. intelligence official said it is “concerning” that intelligence on Russia relating to the election is “being dismissed out of hand as false or politically partisan.”

“The inclination to ignore such intelligence and impugn the integrity of U.S. intelligence officials is contrary to all that is sacred to national security professionals who work day and night to protect this country,” said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. RN6.

FN2 (example 44) provides no explanation for why its sources are left anonymous. Sometimes this is done in real news too, but only when it comes to individual claims or comments, not a whole series of them:

Example 47: The comment, like others that Trump made during the campaign, “is contrary to all that is sacred to national security professionals who work day and night to protect this country,” a U.S. intelligence official told NBC News. RN10.

The above example describes an unnamed official's reaction to a news event and is not a significant news event itself, so it need not be held to a high standard in terms of trustworthiness. Both the significance and the number of claims in FN2, however, warrants a more serious take on source attribution. Whereas other stories average three claims, and few reach a maximum of 8-11 of which one might have an unspecific source, FN2 makes a total of 27 claims of which 24 are attributed to unspecific sources. The story also makes no effort to distance itself from its sources, which negatively affects its trustworthiness. One of attribution's functions is to distance the outlet from the source to avoid lawsuits (Bell, 1991: 207-208), which is done with direct quotation. Despite of that, FN2 makes serious claims about Clinton without it:

Example 48: NYPD sources said these new emails include evidence linking Clinton herself and associates to:

Money laundering, Child exploitation, Sex crimes with minors (children), Perjury, Pay to play through Clinton Foundation, Obstruction of justice, Other felony crimes FN2.

One way to identify fake news based on strategies might be to look at their 'attributions' to see how simple and repetitive they are, if they lack diversity and specifics, and if they lack direct quotes, as these might indicate bias and lack of factuality. This method would not identify all fake news, as some attribute their sources like real news, but it is relatively straightforward to apply.

### 5.4.3. Differences in use in relation to specific moves

Looking at the use of strategies in relation to individual moves, we can see that both real and fake news contain one event per headline, as in examples 49 and 50. Both genres may also use the word “report” here when the story is about a report another news outlet has made:

Example 49: **Goldman executive Gary Cohn tapped for White House economic post – report**  
RN8.

Example 50: **Egyptian paper: Transcript proves Kerry plotted UN resolution against Israel with Palestinians — Report** FN5.

The use of “Egyptian paper” in the above example not only functions as source attribution but also to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the headline, which is something that attribution is not used for in real news headlines in the data. Another major difference among headlines is the use of commentary. There are nine instances of commentary in fake news headlines compared to only two in real news, so it is much more common in fake news. Seven of the instances in fake news are variations of the word “breaking” that aim to increase newsworthiness by demonstrating importance and the two remaining instances are the phrases “what they found was nasty” in FN10 and the exclamation “time for prison!” in FN15. Such clickbait or opinions are not used in real news headlines in the data. Instead, the two instances of commentary in RN (in red below) are observations that provide context:

Example 51: **Contradicting settled science, Donald Trump says "nobody really knows" on climate change** RN4.

Example 52: **Key GOP senators join call for bipartisan Russia election probe, even as their leaders remain mum** RN6.

Another difference between the genres in terms of strategies in headlines is the ‘detail’ (in gray) in FN6. **Obama Signs Executive Order Declaring Investigation Into Election Results; Revote Planned For Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>**. Such use of ‘detail’ is not found in real news, but there seems to be no obvious reason why it could not be used. It is possible it is used in RN too, but no instances made it into the data.

Real and fake news use some strategies differently in leads too. Fake news contains more events per lead than real news – 18 vs 16 – so there are two FN leads with two events, found in FN4 and

FN8. These leads simply present two additional events, however, so there are no significant differences in their use here. There is, however, a great difference in the usage of commentary, once again: two instances in real news and fourteen in fake news. As mentioned earlier, fake news leads are generally longer than real news leads, and one third of the time FN leads begin with an opinionated introductory paragraph that sets the point of view for the rest of the story, which is completely missing in RN. ‘Details’, ‘attributions’, and ‘backgrounds’ in FN leads function similarly to RN, but they also contain ‘follow-ups’, unlike RN. These follow-ups focus on the consequences of the news event, like in example 53 (in purple):

Example 53: Jackie Evancho, a teenage opera singer who got her start on America’s Got Talent, has agreed to sing the National Anthem for the inauguration. Many liberals have attacked her and her family, but proud Americans have supported her. Her music sales have quadrupled thanks to the American people! (via Breitbart) FN11.

Unlike follow-ups that are not in leads and in the context of greater political discourse approve or condemn the news event or speculates its effect on the world, lead follow-ups are tightly connected to the headline and support its point of view:

Example 54: **WHOA – Liberals Attacked Trump Inauguration Singer, But They Got KNOCKED OUT by America!** FN11, headline of the story in example 53.

The follow-up could be a minor news story itself (e.g. “Americans support Evancho: record sales quadrupled”) but it is used to paint liberals as an un-American minority in this story instead. The follow-up makes up half the lead and together with the headline plays a crucial role in setting up the narrative for the rest of the story, summarized in the final paragraph:

Liberals are nothing but a bunch of sore losers, and the fact that they would harass a young girl because of her choice to perform is sickening. The truth is, Liberals will direct their hatred at anyone if they can’t get their way.

The role of non-lead follow-ups is not as important – here is an example from another fake news story (first the headline, then a follow-up from ‘additional information’):

Example 55: **Obama Signs Executive Order Declaring Investigation Into Election Results; Revote Planned For Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>**

Political Analyst Matt Daemon told ABC News that he agrees with the President’s Executive Order and said that he would like to see the electoral college done away with altogether. FN6.

The follow-up leads into a short discussion on the role of the electoral college in elections and it could be removed with the following discussion from the story without significantly affecting its

point of view or information content in terms of the main news event. In short, follow-ups are not used in real news leads, and in fake news they play an important part in establishing the point of view of a story.

In terms of the final moves – ‘story proper’ and ‘additional information’ – there seems to be no apparent differences between the genres in the usage of any particular strategy with the exceptions of ‘event’ and ‘commentary’ in ‘additional information’. That is to say, in both genres, strategies at the end of stories are generally used in the same way: to shift focus away from the main event and move on to explain its significance in relation to a broader political context (as providing such non-essential information is a significant communicative purpose of ‘additional information’, to which communicative purposes of the strategies used in it are subservient). Nevertheless, the uses of ‘event’ and ‘commentary’ are slightly different in the move in fake news, namely that there are five stories in FN that have no ‘events’ in them, whereas the same amount in RN is zero. There are no ‘additional information’ moves in RN that have no ‘events’: RN9, RN11 and RN13 have about 6 instances of that strategy and the rest have two or three. However, when ‘events’ are used in fake news in this context, their use is not significantly different from real news. The use of ‘commentary’, on the other hand, differs in its tilt towards a more opinionated stance towards the end of stories. The necessity for the move ‘rant’ is evidence of this, as the move would not be a viable category if there were not enough opinionated discussion at the end of fake news stories to cast doubt on the communicative purpose of merely informing the reader. It functions as an expression of outrage and it gives the journalist a voice s/he does not have in real news, and the same tendency is noticeable in the move ‘additional information’, although to a lesser extent.



## 6. Discussion

### 6.1. Aims and results

The specific research questions of this study were:

1. How do real and fake news differ structurally in terms of moves and their strategies and steps?
2. What is the relationship between real and fake news in terms of genre?
3. What structural elements of fake news might be useful in their identification?

To answer the first question in terms of moves, it seems that fake news contains the same amount of every move as real news, except there is one fewer instance of ‘additional information’ and there are two ‘rants’ that are not found in RN as a move at all. Move order is more flexible in some FN stories as ‘additional information’ can appear both before and after ‘story proper’ and the placement of ‘additional information’ in the sequence of moves is not only optional in fake news but also not as fixed as it is in real news. Real news has a clear focus on the beginning of stories by placing the most important information there, whereas fake news somewhat splits this between the beginning and the end, although there are some differences within the genre among stories that present themselves as more factual and ones that focus more clearly on moral outrage, suggesting a potential way to divide fake news into subgenres.

In terms of strategies, fake news headlines utilize more sensationalist strategies than real news headlines and differ from real news in that there can be many inaccuracies in how the headline, lead, and story proper reflect each other and how the headline represents the story’s contents in fake news. Fake news leads can be longer and contain more evaluation than real news and may begin with commentary. Commentary in fake news is also more personal and includes more opinions than in real news, and both the amount and length of commentaries is greater in fake news, even though fake news stories are shorter on average. Attribution may lack specifics in FN and fail to absolve the journalist and the news outlet from endorsing what the source has said. No steps were identified within strategies. Generally speaking, strategies that focus on information value and facticity are utilized more often in real news than they are in fake news, and likewise point-of-view and opinion focused strategies are used more in fake news than real news. Real news offers a more fact-based discussion on the greater subject matter of a story and a less

opinionated analysis of the significance of the main news event than fake news. Fake news stories tend to become more personal and opinionated towards the end.

As moves and strategies were largely based on news values, structural differences between the genres reflect differences in values between the genres. Bell points out that news content and structure are connected – which is also a central tenet of genre analysis (Swales 1990: 46-47) – and adds that “the values of news drive the way in which news is presented. We may account for the way news stories are structured only with reference to the values by which one ‘fact’ is judged more newsworthy than another” (Bell, 1991: 155). If we look at what the underlying values behind writing and editing decisions in real and fake news might be, we can see that the values of eliteness, recency, novelty and proximity seem to affect writing and editing decisions in both genres, as new/recent and close-by events involving elite news actors appear often in both, but values that emphasize sensationalism seem to influence fake news writing more than real news. Unexpectedness and superlativeness certainly affect FN headlines in the form of various exclamations like “breaking!” that are not found in RN, and long, evaluative ‘leads’ and ‘rants’ emphasize relevance and personalization – things that can be pictured in personal terms or seen through the eyes of (what FN thinks are) normal Americans. Flexible move order and utilization of opinion-based strategies also serve the purpose of bringing evaluative content to the forefront of FN stories. Consonance, which Bell defines as “compatibility with preconceptions about the social group or nation from which the news actors come” (1991: 157) is similarly a major influence in FN, as a common theme among FN stories seems to be moral outrage towards a social group – “liberals” – and Democratic political figures. Moral outrage indeed seems to be a justification for FN to claim the attention of its readers and an influence behind the emphasis on negative commentary. Negativity seems greatly influential in determining FN story topics and points of view as well. Negativity might be called ‘the basic news value’ (Bell, 1991: 156), and it is used in real news as well to make negative aspects of an event seem significant and newsworthy, but it is much more so in fake news, because FN lacks the commitment RN has to unambiguity and facticity, which is, as Bell puts it, “the degree to which a story contains the kinds of facts and figures on which hard news thrives” (1991: 158). As long as ‘facts and figures’ are valued in real news, there is a limit to how opinionated they can get, although the limit is a soft one. An important part of facticity is also to not only value sources that are high-profile or socially validated and affiliated with organizations or institutions, because fake news values them

too, but also to be unambiguous with these sources and provide them in a specific and clear manner. Fake news values high-profile sources too but they are presented in either an unspecific and ambiguous way or in a simple and repetitive way. If one's aim is to be factual and trustworthy, it is important to also demonstrate reliability with clarity in sourcing. The values of facticity and proper attribution are given less importance in fake news, so they are not under similar constraints in regard to how opinionated they can get.

What, then, is the significance of these findings, and what do the results mean in terms of genre relationship between real and fake news? These differences in moves and strategies suggest that whereas real news follows an information structure called 'inverted pyramid' where the most important information is placed first (Bell, 1991: 169), a significant portion of fake news seems to follow an 'hourglass' shape where the most important information (in the form of commentary) is both first and last. This is evident from the heavy emphasis that fake news has on commentary at the beginning of leads and in the final moves 'additional information' and 'rant'. The nature of commentary there is such that it cannot be edited out without significantly affecting the newsworthiness and point of view of the fake news story, which suggests that it is structurally significant and a major difference between real and fake news. This is not the case with all fake news stories in the data, however, as there are those (e.g. FN4 and FN5) that follow the 'inverted pyramid' pattern more closely, but it does seem to indicate that there is at least a major subgenre of fake news that is identifiable by means of structure alone. Structural analysis also proved useful in identifying fake news because, as the analyses of FN1 and FN10 show, some fake news stories are structurally ambiguous in ways real news is not: the headline and the lead might inaccurately portray/summarize the rest of the story, presenting information such as news actors without referring to them later. Such structural features are not present in real news and enable fake news identification without laborious fact checking. I would therefore claim that structural analysis is useful in identifying fake news, even though it might not identify all cases. It also provides further evidence that real and fake news are separate genres.

## 6.2. How this study compares to previous ones

Research on fake news has largely focused on either how fakes news spreads on social media or on ways to identify fake news (Zhao, 2018). Studies by Zhao (2018), Pérez-Rosas et al. (2017), Stöckl (2018), and Horne & Adali (2017) are all examples of these, and little attention has been given to the structure of fake news. This study aimed to fill this gap and provide valuable insight into the nature of fake news. The structural differences found between the genres were summarized in the previous section.

Similarly to previous studies that utilized move analysis, e.g. Connor & Mauranen (1999), Henry & Roseberry (2001), and Khadka (2014), this study found that while some moves are obligatory, others are not, and there are many ways to realize any particular move. However, an ambiguity in the concept of obligatoriness was discovered in this study. Obligatoriness refers to the quality of a move to appear in all instances in the data, but it is possible that a move appears in all instances without being ‘obligatory’ in the literal sense. The move ‘additional information’ is obligatory in the sense that it appears in all real news stories in the data, but it contains information that can be edited out, so its very definition is against its “obligatoriness”. Although this ambiguity presented no practical analytical issues, it could be corrected in further studies.

Previous studies on news that have also utilized move analysis have found sensationalist elements in news. Ge (2016) found that Chinese legal news reports include several sensational strategies and argued these strategies were influenced by western media. Jabbari & Farokhipour (2014) compared Iranian and American English news reports and found that Iranian newspapers are missing some moves found in the NY Times and the Washington Post and there are differences in move obligatoriness. They concluded that the differences were due to different styles of writing: American style is argumentative, whereas Iranian is informative. I found that sensationalist strategies were generally not used among real news in the data, but they were used often in fake news, especially in headlines. It is possible, however, that a greater sample size would have included real news that contained some sensationalist strategies too, but as it stands, it is hard to say exactly how sensationalist they generally are, except that they are not very sensationalist compared to fake news.

The move analysis carried out in this study generally supports Horne & Adali's (2017) findings regarding fake news features. Their notion that "[...] fake news is targeted for audiences who are not likely to read beyond titles and is aimed at creating mental associations between entities and claims" (Horne & Adali, 2017: 1) seems to hold true in that expression of outrage appears to be the rhetorical objective of fake news and commentary at the beginning of leads seems to aim at establishing a point of view and creating mental associations. It seems fake news is directed at people who share the journalist's or news outlet's values and are outraged when they are transgressed, but given that stories that focus on outrage share an information structure that gives more or less equal value to both the beginning and the ending of a story, it seems unlikely that the target audience is not expected to read the whole story. The very notion of a genre of text that is written and published under the assumption that no-one is going to read (most of) it is very peculiar indeed. If people are unlikely to read anything except the headline, why write anything else? The argument is reasonable if we assume fake news is intended to deceive by appearing legitimate by having a body text, but if its purpose is to spread outrage, the argument is less convincing.

Another fake news feature found by Horne & Adali (2017), namely that FN tends to have a long title crammed with information (Horne & Adali, 2017: 5), seems to be correct: real news headlines in the data are 11 words long on average with the shortest ones being 7 words long and longest 16 words long. Fake news headlines are longer with 13 words on average and shortest ones being 8 words and the longest 21 words long. The headline in FN2 is a good example of why this is: a lot of claims are crammed into a small space and exclamations are often used in an artificial way of increasing newsworthiness:

Example 56: BREAKING BOMBSHELL: NYPD Blows Whistle on New Hillary Emails: Money Laundering, Sex Crimes with Children, Child Exploitation, Pay to Play, Perjury  
FN2

Out of the 16 fake news headlines 8 contain exclamations like "breaking". However, their claim that fake news has a short body text with lots of repetition (Horne & Adali, 2017: 5) seems to be only partly true: fake news stories in the data are indeed shorter than real news – 506 words on average compared to 640 words – but only FN2 seems to contain significant repetition. Without a proper corpus analysis, it is hard to say if other news in the data contain any more repetition than is generally expected of news. My analysis also supports their finding that fake news is more

personal and self-referential (Horne & Adali, 2017: 6) than real news, given the amount and nature of commentary and how the values of personalization, relevance, and consonance are emphasized.

### 6.3. Possible applications

The structural differences between the genres outlined in this study are likely due to differences in news values and what is considered newsworthy – useful information and context in real news vs moral outrage and personalization in fake news. Fake news seems to value personalization, consonance, unexpectedness, superlativeness, and outrage more than real news. This new insight into differing values could be taken into consideration in future attempts at developing methods for fake news identification. For example, a corpus analysis of language used to describe values such as negativity, unexpectedness, superlativeness, consonance, relevance and personalization in news could be used to collect vocabulary and grammatical forms that relate to these values, and this in turn could be used to analyze their prevalence in real and fake news to see their distribution. If it is found that certain vocabulary that relates to these values is used often in fake news but not in real news, it could be used in the development of a program that identifies fake news automatically.

This study also provides readers with some ways to identify fake news. Readers can pay attention to certain features that are common among fake news and rarely (if at all) appear in real news, such as sensationalist headlines (e.g. words and word combinations such as “whoa!” and “breaking bombshell”) and leads that begin with commentary, and if there is a rant at the end of a story. A high amount of commentary and signs of emotive language are also good indicators of fake news. Other identifying features include ambiguous source attributions (“a report said that...”) and simple and repetitive ones (“NYPD sources said that[...] sources said. Sources said...” and so on). The reader might also want to consider if the story is written to inform or to cause outrage, which is often apparent from explicit accusations the writer makes towards the news actor (“Hillary is a crook and a liar”), explicit expressions of opinion (“in my opinion...”, “I think that...”), and phrases directed at the reader (“listen up folks...”). Sometimes there are also inaccuracies in how the headline, lead, and story proper reflect each other and how the headline represents the story’s contents in fake news, so if there is a mismatch between who is presented

as the news actor in the headline and later on in the lead or ‘story proper’, there is a chance the story aims to mislead deliberately. These identification methods are useful as they are relatively easy and quick to apply and do not require laborious and time-consuming fact-checking, but naturally they are not 100% accurate and should be used together to maximize reliability.

#### 6.4. Reliability of results

This study differs from other move analysis studies in that strategies are considered to function somewhat independently of individual moves, the reasons being that, firstly, this makes it possible to avoid a problem with repetition (elaborated on in the following section 6.5. Methodological issues), secondly, it provides a more accurate view of the distribution of different kinds of information in a news story, and thirdly, the strategies were established with reference to Bell’s (1991: 171) structure of news texts that relates structural elements to content rather than their placement in a text. The way this relates to reliability is that in order to accurately describe the structure of news, moves and strategies need to be based on something more than just the researcher’s own intuition (e.g. an expert’s opinion, writing guidelines, institutional practices, etc.) as that intuition is unlikely as accurate as that of an expert and it might not accurately represent most texts in the genre. Moreno & Swales (2018), referring to the study of research articles, recognize the need for experts to “verify the analysts’ interpretations, given their deeper knowledge of the text subject matter and their stronger intuitions regarding the typical rhetorical structure and language used in good papers in their fields” (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 41). Other notable researchers utilizing move analysis have recognized this problem with reliability as well: Henry & Roseberry (2001: 158) analyzed letters of application and gave ten letters for students and lecturers to analyze and they discussed their moves with them to arrive at an agreement on what they should be. Another way to ensure reliability is to base moves and strategies on aforementioned alternatives to intuition. Connor & Mauranen (1999: 51) analyzed grant proposals and used EU guidelines for proposal writing to aid the establishment of their moves. A similar method was used in this study with reference to Bell (1991).

According to Moreno & Swales, researchers typically do not provide information about the process of identifying communicative purposes and structural and linguistical features (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 41-42), which is a problem with, for example, Ge (2016) and Jabbari &

Farokhipour (2014). The model of move analysis is mentioned in the latter study, but it is not described how it was applied or what their moves were based on – was it their intuition or something else? In this thesis, I have taken steps to avoid this problem with reliability by describing the method in detail in section 4 and referring to a study on news writing as basis for developing moves similarly to Connor & Mauranen (1999).

## 6.5. Methodological issues

Move analysis seems to be able to differentiate between real and fake news satisfactorily, and it would also seem able to differentiate between subgenres and identify the most salient structural features, so I would argue it is a useful tool in analyzing fake news and news in general.

However, a discussion on the methodology's weaknesses is warranted.

As mentioned in the previous section, strategies were formulated independently of moves in this study. One weakness of move analysis is that strategies are considered only in reference to individual moves, excluding the possibility that strategies can be used to express multiple moves and ignoring the repetitive nature of strategies in some genres (like news). The problem is that repetitive strategies (ones that are functionally identical or very similar but appear multiple times and/or in different moves) would have to be treated as separate ones in different moves, even though they functioned the same way, if one were to insist them to be used only in relation to particular moves. This problem seems to arise when there is one overarching communicative purpose that is shared by different moves and contributed to by various strategies – such as newsworthiness in news. The problem of repetitiveness and having to come up with different names for what are essentially the same strategy is solved by treating them the same and recognizing that strategies can be similar enough in different moves to be considered the same strategy, and that one strategy can serve different communicative purposes on the level of a move. An example of this would be two moves, 'headline' and 'lead', that are both realized by the strategy 'describing an event'. The presentation of 'headline', its placement in text, its style and linguistic features and communicative purpose are all different enough from 'lead' to distinguish it as a separate move, yet both can be realized by the same strategy: describing an event. The headline aims to attract the reader and summarize the main news event and the lead summarizes the event (but not as succinctly) and establishes a point of view. Both also aim to



increase the newsworthiness of the story. The strategy can serve the communicative purposes of both by describing the news event in headlines in a way that attracts readers and is concise and in leads by being a little less concise and presenting the event from some point of view. This does not mean they are different strategies – merely that there is a meta-level of strategies – as they still serve the same communicative purpose of presenting newsworthiness (shared by both moves). It should also be noted that the strategies presented in this thesis rarely work alone but in combination with other strategies that together contribute to the overarching communicative purpose of presenting newsworthiness. Creating separate categories for the same function on the basis that they are in different moves is unnecessary by definition as it is function that determines necessity.

Other methodological issues were mentioned in section 4.2. Analytical issues, but to recap: there is no consensus on what the minimal unit of analysis should be in move analysis, and researchers need to establish it themselves (Moreno & Swales, 2018: 41). In this study, moves correspond to either individual or multiple sentences and paragraphs depending on what kinds of information they relate to the reader, and on the level of strategies, the minimal unit of analysis is the phrase as they account for most expressions of news values. It is entirely possible this issue needs to be solved on a study-to-study basis and that there can be no overarching solution, provided that the minimal unit of analysis depends on what kind of text is being analyzed. Another issue is the question of whether analysis best proceeds “top-down” or “bottom-up” in terms of identifying functions for parts of text, but this is not a relevant theoretical issue as it has little bearing on the analysis in practice: move analysis proceeds simultaneously top-down and bottom-up as various interrelated levels of analysis are carried out at the same time (Flowerdew, 2002: 95, in Moreno & Swales 2018: 41).

## 6.6. Suggestions for further study

There is a lot to study about fake news and the structural analysis carried out in this thesis merely scratches the surface. Features, editorials and other news subgenres were excluded from analysis in this study, so they could provide a natural next step for the structural analysis of news texts. It also seems to be possible to divide fake news into subgenres using genre analysis, so further research could provide more information about such subgenres and their most salient features.

News values were taken into consideration when forming strategies for moves in this study, and it turns out their connection to news structure is quite significant. One final subject of study that comes to mind from that is bias in real news. The nature and significance of bias in real news can be studied more thoroughly when it is considered in relation to specific news values and when it can be compared to how those values are expressed in fake news than without such considerations. Further study on this will help us draw a clearer line between the genres and establish where the limits of sensationalist and opinionated writing should be for news that aims to be trustworthy.

## 7. Conclusion

The aim of this thesis was to explore the structures of real and fake news and compare their differences. The working hypothesis was that real and fake news have different goals/rhetorical objectives, and their structure reflects that. Move analysis revealed that there are indeed structural differences between the genres: real news follows an ‘inverted pyramid’ whereby the most important information is placed first, whereas a significant portion of fake news gives equal importance to the beginning and the end of stories, best visualized by an ‘hourglass’ shape. These differences are due to different rhetorical aims which in turn are caused by differences in the underlying news values. In other words, real and fake news consider different things newsworthy: information and context that (more or less) accurately represents the world in real news vs moral outrage and personalization in fake news. In terms of individual news values, fake news seems to value personalization, consonance, unexpectedness, superlativeness, and outrage more than facticity. Move analysis has proven useful in outlining differences between real and fake news, and utilization of textual structure in identifying fake news and developing automatic tools that identify them is recommended.

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## Appendix

Data from: <https://github.com/rpitrust/fakenewsdata1>

**Yellow** = Event (Actor, action, time, place) [Reports a newsworthy event, the main action]

**Red** = Commentary (Context, evaluation, expectations) [Establishes a point of view or the significance of the story. Observations, comparisons, expectations, etc.]

**Gray** = Detail (Names, locations, dates, numbers) [A definition or a description; a matter-of-factly statement about the nature of something.]

**Blue** = Background (Previous episodes, history) [Places an event in a chain of events]

**Green** = Attribution (Source) [Demonstrates reliability of information]

**Purple** = Follow-up (Consequences, reaction to event) [Describes what happened next]

Move name written at the end of move.

Real News

**RN1. In Reversal, Gambian President Rejects Loss And Calls For New Election** headline

After publicly conceding electoral defeat last week, President Yahya Jammeh of Gambia has reversed course and is calling for a new election. lead

Jammeh has ruled the tiny West African country since seizing power in a coup in 1994, and his public concession to President-elect Adama Barrow on Dec. 2 led to hopes of the first peaceful transition of power in Gambia since it became independent from the U.K. in 1965.

On Friday, Jammeh said the Independent Electoral Commission made errors in vote tallies.

"In the same way that I accepted faithfully the results, believing that the IEC was independent and honest and reliable, I hereby reject the results in totality," Jammeh said in a televised speech.

He also said there were other irregularities and problems in the electoral process.

"Our investigations reveal that in some cases, voters were told that the opposition has already won and there was no need for them to vote," Jammeh said. Story proper

Last week, supporters of the opposition took to the streets to celebrate Barrow's win. Jammeh's allegations are now "plunging Gambia into confusion and uncertainty," NPR's Ofeibea Quist-Arcton reports.

President-elect Barrow responded, telling reporters, "The outgoing president has no constitutional authority to reject the result of the election and order for fresh elections to be held," Reuters reports. "I urge him to change his current position and accept the verdict of the people in good faith for the sake of

the Gambia, our homeland, whose people deserve peace and freedom and prosperity," he added to The Associated Press.

The U.S. joined international bodies in condemning the announcement.

"This action is a reprehensible and unacceptable breach of faith with the people of The Gambia and an egregious attempt to undermine a credible election process and remain in power illegitimately," State Department spokesman Mark C. Toner said in a press release.

The Economic Community of West African States, the U.N. and African Union echoed the sentiment in a joint statement:

"They call on the government of The Gambia to abide by its constitutional responsibilities and international obligations. It is fundamental that the verdict of the ballots should be respected, and that the security of the president -elect Adama Barrow, and that of all Gambian citizen be fully ensured."

Wire services report the streets of the capital Banjul were calm Saturday, with a heavy presence of police and soldiers. Gambians closed down shops and stayed home out of fear of violence.

Human rights groups have criticized Jammeh for abuses during his 22-year rule. In its 2016 report, Human Rights Watch said his government "frequently committed serious human rights violations including arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, and torture against those who voiced opposition to the government," creating "a climate of fear within Gambia."

On Saturday, the organization retweeted a statement from deputy program director Babatunde Olugboji saying they were "deeply concerned."

Diplomats told Reuters that it's unclear what international organizations plan to do, but there is a precedent for military intervention. In 1981, they note, the surrounding country of Senegal sent in troops to stop a coup in Gambia.

Opposition leader Mai Ahmad Fatty urged calm. "We are working round the clock to restore sanity," he told the AP. "We have the full support of our people. The world is with us." Additional info

## **RN2. No Government Shutdown: Senate Passes Funding Bill After Democrats Back Down** headline

Senate Democrats dropped their objections Friday night to a short-term-funding bill to keep the government running, and the bill passed less than an hour before the midnight deadline. lead

It's become a familiar year-end act for Congress: passing a short-term-funding bill that will keep the government running for a few more months. This funding measure, which passed 63-36, runs out in April.

Despite overwhelming support in the House on Thursday, the spending package hit a roadblock in the Senate, where coal state Democrats staged a late protest to try to alter provisions affecting miners.

The stopgap includes \$45 million to continue health benefits for four months for certain retired coal miners, whose coverage was set to expire at the end of the year. Democrats, led by West Virginia's Joe Manchin, wanted a full-year extension, but with little leverage and a shutdown looming, they relented with a promise to reignite that fight in four months.

"Would I have preferred that provision to be more generous? Of course I would have," said Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. "But we'll be back at it in April, and I think it's highly unlikely that we'll take it away."

With House lawmakers already back home for the holidays on Friday — and zero interest from GOP leaders to reopen negotiations — Democrats backed down in time to avert a midnight Friday shutdown. Story proper

The spending bill keeps the federal government running on autopilot until April 28. Congressional Republicans opted to punt the annual spending bills into next year to wait until President-elect Donald Trump assumes office. With control of both the White House and Congress, Republicans will have more sway over how roughly \$1 trillion is spent on federal agencies and programs.

The bill runs through April to buy Congress more time to negotiate the fiscal year 2017 spending bills, because the Senate is expected to be consumed by the confirmation process for Trump administration nominees in the first quarter of next year.

Since the spending bill is a must-pass measure, it also includes some unrelated provisions and additional funding measures. For instance, Senate Republicans included language that will help expedite the confirmation process for Trump's defense secretary nominee, retired Gen. James Mattis.

For Mattis to be confirmed, Congress must waive a law that requires a seven-year cooling-off period for current or former military officials to hold that Cabinet post. Mattis retired in 2013.

Democrats objected to the language, but Republicans said it was necessary to expedite consideration of a critical administration post. The waiver will still be reviewed by the House and Senate Armed Services Committees, and it will need to pass a 60-vote threshold in the Senate.

Mattis has been widely praised on both sides of the aisle and is expected to be confirmed, barring something unforeseen coming to light during the confirmation process.

The measure also includes just over \$10 billion in Overseas Contingency Funding, better known as the side Pentagon account that funds the ongoing war efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

An additional \$4.1 billion is directed to disaster relief, including recovery efforts from Hurricane Matthew.

Democrats also secured funding to assist the Flint, Mich., community with repairing its drinking water systems. Some \$170 million is directed toward infrastructure improvements and preventive care against lead poisoning for mothers and children.

Congress approved a biomedical research bill this week, and the stopgap spending measure includes funds for new programs authorized in the legislation, such as \$352 million to the National Institutes of Health for medical research and \$500 million to states to combat the opioid epidemic.

The measure also includes a provision that will prevent a pay raise for members of Congress. The pay freeze has been in place since 2010. Additional info

### **RN3. Rand Paul Gives Glimpse of Trouble Trump May Face With His Party Over Government Spending** headline

Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul gave an indication today of the trouble that President-elect Trump may face from his own party in trying to fulfill campaign promises that cost money. lead

The former GOP presidential candidate said on ABC News' "This Week" that he "won't vote for a budget that never balances" and that he is working to find a few other conservative GOP senators to join him.

"The current budget that the Republicans are looking at never balances. How can that be fiscally responsible? And how can we look at the public with a straight face and say, yes, we ran on balanced budgets, we're for the balanced budget amendment, and yet the budget we're going to introduce, that we're going to repeal Obamacare with never balances?" Paul said.

Trump this week repeated his promise that he wants a trillion-dollar infrastructure program and he promised during the campaign to repeal Obamacare.

Paul said that with the help of other conservative senators he might be able to block a budget that he considers irresponsible.

"All it takes is a couple of us. If there are a few conservatives in the Senate wing of the Republican Party that will say no to a budget that never balances, we could have the power to say to the leadership, you know what, we need a better budget," Paul said.

"I don't know if it will happen, but I know that I will be one that won't vote for a budget that never balances," he said. Story proper

Paul also addressed reports that ExxonMobile CEO Rex Tillerson has emerged as a likely pick for secretary of state, saying that he is "going to reserve judgment on Tillerson."

But the Kentucky senator had strong warnings about former United Nations Ambassador John Bolton, who is a possible contender for secretary of state or deputy secretary of state.

"I'll do anything to try to prevent John Bolton from getting any position because I think his world view is naive," Paul said. "He still believes in regime change. He's still a big cheerleader for the Iraq War. He's promoted a nuclear attack by Israel on Iran. He wants to do regime change in Iran."

"John Bolton doesn't get it," Paul said. Additional info



**RN4. Contradicting settled science, Donald Trump says "nobody really knows" on climate change**  
headline

Donald Trump said again on Sunday that he is "open-minded" about climate change -- but also that "nobody really knows" the truth about the issue, which contradicts the fact that there is near-universal scientific agreement on the issue. lead

In an interview with "Fox News Sunday," moderator Chris Wallace pointed out to Mr. Trump that in the space of a week he both met with former Vice President Al Gore and appointed Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt, a climate change denier who has opposed many environmental regulations, to head the Environmental Protection Agency. Where, Wallace asked, does Mr. Trump stand on climate change?

"I'm very open-minded. I'm still open-minded," he said. "Nobody really knows."

However, there is a near-universal scientific consensus that climate change is a real phenomenon -- despite continued opposition to the notion among primarily Republican politicians. NASA's website on climate change, for example, notes that approximately 97 percent of publishing climate scientists agree that human activities are very likely responsible for rising temperatures. Story proper

His comments came just days after his transition team created a questionnaire with 74 questions for Energy Department officials to identify employees who had been involved in international climate talks over the last five years, as well as employees who have helped develop Obama administration climate policies.

The questionnaire, obtained by CBS News and first reported by Bloomberg News, asks, for example, "Which programs within [the Department of Energy] are essential to meeting the goals of President Obama's Climate Action Plan?"

Mr. Trump's answer Sunday on the climate change issue is similar to the one he gave in a meeting with the editorial board of The New York Times last month -- after a campaign in which Mr. Trump repeatedly insisted climate change was a "hoax" invented by China.

"I have a very open mind," he said at the time. "And I'm going to study a lot of the things that happened on it and we're going to look at it very carefully. But I have an open mind."

Still, Mr. Trump said his reason for choosing Pruitt -- whom many environmental groups immediately blasted -- was to "speed up the process" for permit approvals and other EPA business.

"If you look at what China's doing. If you look at what -- I could name country after country," he said. "You look at what's happening in Mexico where our people are just -- plants are being built and they don't wait 10 years to get an approval to build a plant, okay? They build it like the following day or the following week. We can't let all of these permits that take forever to get stop our jobs."

As for the Paris Agreement, the landmark international climate agreement that went into effect this fall, Mr. Trump said he is "studying" the agreement -- but that he worries it will put the U.S. at a "competitive disadvantage." International energy and environment experts worry that Mr. Trump, who said earlier this year that he would "tear up" the Paris deal, could throw the entire agreement into jeopardy.

"Paris, I'm studying," he said. "I do say this: I don't want that agreement to put us at a competitive disadvantage with other countries. And as you know, there are different times and different time limits on that agreement. I don't want that to give China, or other countries signing agreements an advantage over us." additional info

#### RN5. **New Zealand's Parliament chooses new prime minister** headline

Bill English, New Zealand's finance minister and a former farmer, will be sworn in as the country's 39th prime minister on Monday after his colleagues in the Parliament chose him as their new leader. lead

English emerged victorious from a meeting of the conservative National Party caucus. Two other candidates for the job withdrew last week after English gained more support than them. He is to be officially sworn in on Monday afternoon.

His ascension from deputy prime minister follows the surprise resignation last week of John Key after eight years as prime minister.

Key was a popular leader and was expected to contest a fourth straight election next year. But he said he wanted to leave while he was on top and to spend more time with his wife and two children. Story proper

English, 54, has degrees in commerce and literature. He has been praised for his handling of the country's economy in his role as finance minister.

A practicing Roman Catholic, English has been a politician for 26 years, after he was first elected to the parliament in 1990. He had a previous unsuccessful stint as party leader, taking his party to a big election defeat in 2002. He said he's gained wisdom and experience since then.

"I was 39 years old then, with six children under 13," he said last week. "So if nothing else, I've got the opportunity to focus much more on the job now."

Under English, New Zealand has been enjoying relatively robust annual GDP growth of more than 3 percent and the unemployment rate has fallen below 5 percent. English has also managed to return small surpluses on the government's books over the past couple of years.

English said he will deliver tax cuts and spread the country's growing wealth to where it is needed. Additional info

**RN6. Key GOP senators join call for bipartisan Russia election probe, even as their leaders remain mum** headline

Two Senate Republicans joined demands for a bipartisan probe into Russia's suspected election interference allegedly designed to bolster Donald Trump as questions continue to mount about the president-elect's expected decision to nominate a secretary of state candidate with close ties to Russia. lead

Sens. Lindsey O. Graham (R-S.C.) and John McCain (R-Ariz.) — the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee — joined calls by incoming Senate Democratic leader Charles E. Schumer (N.Y.) and Armed Services ranking Democrat Jack Reed (R.I.) for a thorough, bipartisan investigation of Russian influence in the U.S. elections. Their statement came two days after The Washington Post reported the CIA's private conclusion that Russia's activities were intended to tip the scales to help Trump.

"Recent reports of Russian interference in our election should alarm every American," the four senators said in a statement on Sunday morning. "Democrats and Republicans must work together, and across the jurisdictional lines of the Congress, to examine these recent incidents thoroughly and devise comprehensive solutions to deter and defend against further cyberattacks."

"This cannot become a partisan issue. The stakes are too high for our country. We are committed to working in this bipartisan manner, and we will seek to unify our colleagues around the goal of investigating and stopping the grave threats that cyberattacks conducted by foreign governments pose to our national security," they added.

Republican senators John McCain (Arizona) and Lindsey Graham (South Carolina) have been highly critical of Donald Trump's comments about Russia. (Michael Reynolds/EPA)

But McCain and Graham — who frequently criticized Trump before and after his election — have often bucked Republican leaders, and their embrace of a wide-ranging Russia probe does not necessarily signal support from other Republicans, including Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.). story proper

Sen. Susan Collins (Maine), one of the more moderate Republicans in the upper chamber, suggested a bipartisan investigation may be "useful toward achieving an objective accounting of any alleged meddling by foreign adversaries."

"The purpose of any investigation, whether by the Obama administration or Congress, is not to question or relitigate the results of any past or present Presidential election," she said in a statement. "Instead, any review must focus on the long overdue task of improving the defenses of the United States against cyber attacks, including those that might seek to affect or influence political campaign."

Another GOP senator — Sen. James Lankford (Okla.), who serves on the Senate Intelligence Committee — agreed with McCain and Graham's decision to support a bipartisan investigation of suspected cyber intrusion by Russia in the U.S. elections.

"Cybersecurity investigation of Russian interference can't be partisan," Lankford tweeted Sunday.

Meanwhile, the Senate Intelligence Committee's chairman, Richard Burr (R-N.C.), said Sunday that the panel "will continue to conduct vigorous oversight of all intelligence matters."

But he made no specific mention of Russia, unlike Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) said cyber threats by America's "rivals," including Russia, pose "serious challenges" that should not be "politicized or viewed through a partisan lens."

Johnson said as chairman Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and a member of the Senate Foreign Relations panel he would "continue to hold hearings based on fact — not innuendo — for the sole purpose of informing effective policy and appropriate countermeasures."

Republicans may be loath to join calls for such a wide-ranging investigation into Russia's election-related activities given that Trump has dismissed the CIA claims as "ridiculous." They may worry about picking an obvious fight with the president-elect before he is even inaugurated. Trump has signaled he wants a warmer relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin, whom he praised during the campaign.

"I think it's just another excuse. I don't believe it .??. No, I don't believe it at all," Trump said of the CIA charges on "Fox News Sunday." Trump campaign manager Kellyanne Conway echoed her boss on CBS's "Face the Nation," saying that such allegations from the intelligence community were "laughable and ridiculous."

Trump also played down the importance of receiving the daily intelligence briefing, a tradition for presidents and presidents-elect. He has received the briefings only sporadically since winning the election.

A U.S. intelligence official said it is "concerning" that intelligence on Russia relating to the election is "being dismissed out of hand as false or politically partisan."

"The inclination to ignore such intelligence and impugn the integrity of U.S. intelligence officials is contrary to all that is sacred to national security professionals who work day and night to protect this country," said the official, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. Additional info

**Trump denies CIA's assessment that Russia tried to help him win election.** subheadline

CIA officials told senators it is now "quite clear" that electing Donald Trump was Russia's goal. In an interview on Fox News Sunday on Dec. 11, President-elect Trump denied the CIA's assessment. (Victoria Walker/The Washington Post) lead

McConnell himself has been notably silent since the Post report was published on Friday night, and his number-two, Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn (R-Texas), downplayed the significance of it in a series of tweets — although some of them suggested Congress's review of Russian actions should broaden.

"All this 'news' of Russian hacking: it has been going on for years. Serious, but hardly news," Cornyn tweeted Saturday.

The Texas Republican seemed to support, however, a wider look at Russia as a global actor rather than one confined to its role in the U.S. election, retweeting the below tweet from Graham: "Cyber-attacks, undermining NATO, Ukraine, butchery in Syria, etc. I intend to look at all things Russia — not just election influence." story proper

Meanwhile, House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.), in his first substantial comment on Russian hacking since the report Friday, said Sunday he “rejects any politicization of intelligence matters,” calling foreign intervention “unacceptable.”

For the most part, other key Republicans were silent on the issue of whether to embrace a bipartisan look at whether Putin’s government was behind the hacks of the Democratic National Committee emails and their publication by WikiLeaks in an alleged bid to help Trump and damage Hillary Clinton’s campaign.

At the same time, several Republican senators raised concerns about Trump’s likely nomination of Rex Tillerson, ExxonMobil’s chief executive, as secretary of state due to his ties to Putin. Republicans in a 52-to-48 Senate have only the slimmest of margins to get him confirmed, should Democrats decide to uniformly oppose the nomination. Only three Republicans would need to side with Democrats in order to defeat Tillerson.

The potential nomination sparked a backlash among the party’s traditional hawks who oppose Putin, and some senior strategists feared that more than a handful of Republicans would outright oppose his nomination – requiring Trump to find Democratic support in order to confirm his potential Secretary of State.

“It’s a matter of concern to me that he has such a close relationship with Vladimir Putin, that that would color his approach to Vladimir Putin and the Russian threat,” McCain told CBS’s Face the Nation.

“Being a ‘friend of Vladimir’ is not an attribute I am hoping for from a Secretary of State,” Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.) tweeted Sunday.

Republicans outnumber Democrats by only one vote on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, which must approve a secretary of state nominee before the full Senate votes. Over the weekend, several committee Democrats, including Sens. Robert Menendez (N.J.) and Christopher A. Coons (Del.), stated their deep skepticism of Tillerson as a candidate.

In a post on Facebook, Menendez called the idea Tillerson could be named secretary of state “alarming and absurd,” concluding that “the Trump administration would be guaranteeing Russia has a willing accomplice in the President’s Cabinet guiding our nation’s foreign policy.”

Yet the committee’s chairman, Sen. Bob Corker (R-Tenn.) — who was considered a possible pick for Trump’s secretary of state — has said Tillerson would be a good choice.

“If it is Rex Tillerson, he is a very good individual,” Corker tweeted.

Should Tillerson make it to a floor vote, Democrats could not block the nomination alone. If Democrats stick together, Republicans must muster at least 50 of the 52 votes they will have to successfully confirm him, as Vice President-elect Mike Pence could cast the tiebreaking vote.

Graham has already also strongly hinted that he might oppose the nomination.

“I don’t know the man much at all, but let’s put it this way: If you received an award from the Kremlin, order of friendship, then we’re gonna have some talkin’,” Graham said early Saturday morning. “We’ll have some questions. I don’t want to prejudge the guy but that’s a bit unnerving.” additional info

## RN7. Trump says 'nobody really knows' if climate change is real headline

President-elect Donald Trump said Sunday that “nobody really knows” whether climate change is real and that he is “studying” whether the United States should withdraw from the global warming agreement struck in Paris a year ago. lead

In an interview with “Fox News Sunday” host Chris Wallace, Trump said he’s “very open-minded” on whether climate change is underway but has serious concerns about how President Obama’s efforts to cut carbon emissions have undercut America’s global competitiveness.

“I’m still open-minded. Nobody really knows,” Trump said. “Look, I’m somebody that gets it, and nobody really knows. It’s not something that’s so hard and fast. I do know this: Other countries are eating our lunch.”

There is a broad scientific consensus that human activity — including the burning of fossil fuels for transportation, heating and industrial manufacturing — is driving recent climate change. In its most recent report, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change concluded that it is “extremely likely” that, since the 1950s, humans and their greenhouse gas emissions have been the “dominant cause” of the planet’s warming trend. The top 10 hottest years on record have all been since 1998, and 2016 is expected to be the hottest year since formal record-keeping began in 1880. Story proper

But it’s not the first time that Trump has disregarded that established scientific view.

During the presidential campaign, Trump referred to climate change as a “hoax” perpetrated by the Chinese, a comment he later described as a joke. But during a town hall in New Hampshire, he also mocked the idea of global warming. At that event, Meghan Andrade, a volunteer for the League of Conservation Voters, asked Trump what he would do to address the issue, to which he replied: “Let me ask you this — take it easy, fellas — how many people here believe in global warming? Do you believe in global warming?”

After asking three times “Who believes in global warming?” and soliciting a show of hands, Trump concluded that “nobody” believed climate change was underway except for Andrade.

During Sunday’s interview with Wallace, Trump said he needed to balance any environmental regulation against the fact that manufacturers and other businesses in China and elsewhere are able to operate without the kind of restrictions faced by their U.S. competitors.

“If you look at what — I could name country after country. You look at what’s happening in Mexico, where our people are just — plants are being built, and they don’t wait 10 years to get an approval to build a plant, okay?” he said. “They build it like the following day or the following week. We can’t let all of these permits that take forever to get stop our jobs.”

The U.S. has outpaced the rest of the developed world in terms of growth since the 2008 recession, though developing countries such as China boast higher growth rates. Typically, economists compare the U.S. against other industrialized nations since developing countries typically grow faster than their developed counterparts.

The New York businessman made the same critique of the Environmental Protection Agency, to which he has nominated Oklahoma Attorney General Scott Pruitt — a climate change skeptic — as the head. Wallace asked whether he was “going to take a wrecking ball to the Obama legacy,” to which Trump replied, “No. No. No. I don’t want to do that at all. I just want what’s right.”

“EPA, you can’t get things approved. I mean, people are waiting in line for 15 years before they get rejected, okay?” he said. “That’s why people don’t want to invest in this country.”

It is unclear which permit application Trump was referring to, but he has repeatedly criticized EPA rules. And though he has given mixed signals on whether he would back out of the United States’ voluntary commitments under the Paris climate agreement, it would take several years for the next administration to withdraw now that the agreement has entered into force.

Last week Trump’s transition team for the Energy Department asked officials there to identify which employees have participated in international climate negotiations or worked on domestic efforts to cut greenhouse gases, such as calculating the social cost of carbon. Several scientists, federal union officials and public watchdog groups have expressed concern that these individuals could be targeted for retaliation once Trump takes office.

The Trump transition team has issued a list of 74 questions for the Energy Department, asking officials there to identify which department employees and contractors have worked on forging an international climate pact as well as domestic efforts to cut the nation’s carbon output. (Whitney Shefte/The Washington Post)

At the urging of daughter Ivanka, Trump has met in the past week with former vice president Al Gore and actor Leonardo DiCaprio, both environmental activists. Trump described the sessions as “good meetings” but did not elaborate. Additional info

**RN8. Goldman executive Gary Cohn tapped for White House economic post – report** headline

President-elect Donald Trump has asked Goldman Sachs executive Gary Cohn to head his White House national economic council, a group that coordinates economic policy across agencies, NBC News reported on Friday. lead

If elected, Cohn would be the third Goldman alumni picked to serve in the Trump administration: Steven Mnuchin, nominated to head the treasury department, and Steve Bannon, picked to be White House chief strategist, are both ex-Goldman Sachs executives. Story proper

Cohn, 56, is president and chief operating officer at the Wall Street firm and had until recently been widely considered the heir apparent to chief executive Lloyd Blankfein. But according to the Wall Street Journal, Cohn, who met with Trump on Tuesday, has been considering a move in recent months.

A Goldman Sachs spokesman was not immediately available for comment.

Cohn is a former Goldman commodities trader from Ohio who joined the firm in 1990. He served in a variety of leadership roles in bond trading, becoming co-head of Goldman’s broader securities and,

eventually, co-president in 2006. He makes frequent appearances at industry conferences and on television, speaking on the state of the financial markets.

Cohn is a registered Democrat who has donated money to both Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton.

If he takes the post, he will be following in the footsteps of Robert Rubin and Stephen Friedman, two other onetime Goldman Sachs executives who served in that role. Additional info

#### **RN9. Intelligence figures fear Trump reprisals over assessment of Russia election role** headline

Legislators overseeing the CIA and other intelligence agencies have told the Guardian they will be vigilant about reprisals from Donald Trump over an internal assessment that Russia intervened in the 2016 election to ensure Trump's victory. lead

Fears of retaliation rose within US intelligence agencies over a tense weekend that saw Trump publicly dismiss not only the assessment but the basic competence of the intelligence apparatus.

"When the president-elect's transition team is attempting to discredit the entire intelligence community [IC], it has never been more important for the IC and Congress to guard against possible political pressure or retaliation against intelligence analysts," Ron Wyden, an Oregon Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee, told the Guardian.

Like his Democratic colleagues on the panel, Wyden is pressing Barack Obama for additional public disclosures revealing Russian electoral interference. Such pressure has placed the CIA and other intelligence agencies between the incoming president to whom they will soon answer and a chorus of legislators, mostly but not exclusively Democrats, who consider the Russia hack a national emergency.

It is not possible to gauge precisely how deep fears of retaliation run within the intelligence world. Two currently serving intelligence officers told the Guardian this weekend they had not heard their colleagues express such concerns.

One noted that civil-service laws prevented Trump from launching a purge, but also called attention to a report that Trump is combing through the energy department bureaucracy to identify people "who have attended climate change policy conferences".

Former intelligence officers told the Guardian they considered retaliation by Trump to be all but a certainty after he is sworn into office next month. Trump still has several appointments to make at the highest levels of the intelligence apparatus, picks which are likely to be bellwethers for the new president's attitudes toward the agencies.

"There is not just smoke here. There is a blazing 10-alarm fire, the sirens are wailing, the Russians provided the lighter fluid, and Trump is standing half-burnt and holding a match," said Glenn Carle, a retired CIA officer and interrogator.

"The facts hurt, Trump won't like the truth, and he will without question seek to destroy those individuals or organizations that say or do anything that he thinks harm his precious grandiosity." Story proper



After congressional Democrats called for additional briefings and public disclosures about an intelligence consensus that Russia made a deliberate decision to intervene in the election, Barack Obama ordered a new review of the evidence.

On Friday, the Washington Post reported that intelligence sources believe the Russians decided to penetrate the Democratic National Committee's digital networks with the goal of aiding Trump, not merely to spread uncertainty about the outcome of the election.

In response, Trump attacked the credibility of the intelligence agencies on which he will rely for early warning of security emergencies and geopolitical developments. His transition team said in a statement: "These are the same people who said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction."

Adam Schiff, the leading Democrat on the House intelligence committee, said Trump "cannot abide the idea that Russian hacking helped his campaign" and was lashing out in a manner that undermined confidence in his handling of intelligence.

"If Trump is willing to disregard sound intelligence now, and demean the hard-working and patriotic Americans who produced it, I fear what he will do as president when confronted with unpleasant truths," Schiff said.

"Will he accept the best insights of our agencies, or punish them for daring to contradict his assumptions?"

Trump's clash with the CIA comes at a moment of acute turmoil within intelligence circles. Obama officials jeopardized the tenure of National Security Agency chief Mike Rogers in a seemingly thwarted bureaucratic reorganization of the US surveillance and cybersecurity apparatus. Congressional sources have told the Guardian they expect to hold a public hearing on the issue in January.

Should Trump go through with the reshuffle, it will leave him appointing an NSA director as well as a director of national intelligence, after James Clapper announced his resignation last month. Trump has also been noncommittal about retaining the FBI director, James Comey, whose bureau houses significant sympathy for Trump.

Congressional Republicans are in an uncomfortable position, between a president of their own party and Russia, a traditional adversary.

Devin Nunes, a California Republican who chairs the House intelligence committee, said on Saturday Russian electoral hacking was "no surprise". He also blamed Obama for coming late to the threat out of "delusions of 'resetting' relations with Russia" – a policy that Trump is also pursuing.

On Sunday, anti-Trump GOP hawks Lindsey Graham and John McCain offered a different path, joining with leading Democratic senators Chuck Schumer and Jack Reed to plead for a bipartisan inquiry into the alleged Russian hacking, which they said endangered the country.

"We have an obligation to inform the public about recent cyberattacks that have cut to the heart of our free society," the senators said in a joint statement.

"Democrats and Republicans must work together, and across the jurisdictional lines of the Congress, to examine these recent incidents thoroughly and devise comprehensive solutions to deter and defend against further cyberattacks."

Also on Sunday, Elijah Cummings, the Maryland Democrat on the investigations-heavy House oversight committee, pressured the Republican committee chairman, Jason Chaffetz, and speaker of the house Paul Ryan to "join us now in our effort to launch a robust and truly bipartisan investigation of Russian interference in our election that puts our nation's interests over the interests of any political party".

Carle, the retired CIA officer, said Trump's temperament had played into Russia's hands and put the president-elect on a collision course with the CIA.

He said: "Look, in my professional assessment as an intelligence officer, Trump has a reflexive, defensive, monumentally narcissistic personality, for whom the facts and national interest are irrelevant, and the only thing that counts is whatever gives personal advantage and directs attention to himself.

"He is about the juiciest intelligence target an intelligence office could imagine. He groans with vulnerabilities. He will only work with individuals or entities that agree with him and build him up, and he is a shockingly easy intelligence 'target' to manipulate."

Were Trump an intelligence officer himself, Carle said, "he would be removed and possibly charged with having accepted the clandestine support of a hostile power to the harm of the United States".

A senior intelligence official who was not cleared to talk to reporters supported the push to declassify additional material on the "serious matter" of the alleged Russian electoral interference, since "it happened on our watch". Additional info

#### **RN10. Intelligence Agencies Distressed by Trump's Rejection of Findings on Russia** headline

President-elect Donald Trump's dismissal of U.S. intelligence findings that Russia tried to sway the presidential election is a distressing slap in the face to the intelligence community, current and former U.S. intelligence officials said Sunday. lead

Trump on Sunday repeated his rejection of the intelligence community's conclusion that Russia actively worked to help him win the election, calling the idea "ridiculous" in an interview on "Fox News Sunday."

The comment, like others that Trump made during the campaign, "is contrary to all that is sacred to national security professionals who work day and night to protect this country," a U.S. intelligence official told NBC News.

The official called it "concerning" that the president-elect has chosen to "impugn the integrity of U.S. intelligence officials" by disputing professional intelligence judgments as false or politically partisan.

A congressional official with knowledge of the issue told NBC News on Saturday that the CIA has concluded that Russia mounted a covert intelligence operation to help Trump win the election.

Another source briefed on the intelligence told NBC News that the U.S. government has identified specific Russian actors it believes were involved in computer systems hacks — based on intercepted communications, human tips and computer forensics.

Trump dismissed such reports in a statement Friday that derided the CIA as "the same people that said Saddam Hussein had weapons of mass destruction." Story proper

A former senior intelligence official also noted Trump's assertion Sunday on Fox News that he doesn't always take the Presidential Daily Briefing — the top-secret briefing on national security developments — because "I'm, like, a smart person."

"It is curious that someone who refuses to take intelligence briefings has decided that he doesn't agree with the analysis contained in them," the former official said.

Rep. Adam Schiff of California, the top Democrat the House Intelligence Committee, also blasted Trump, saying the integrity of the electoral process is called into question "when President-elect Trump and his transition team minimize or dismiss the intelligence assessments themselves."

"Even more damaging are comments that impugn the tens of thousands of Americans who are at work every day of the year, many in great physical danger, to protect us and to provide our national leadership — regardless of political party — with the best information possible," Schiff said Saturday.

"Perhaps, once he has taken office, Mr. Trump will go to the CIA and look at the rows of memorial stars in the lobby — each representing a fallen officer — and reflect on his disparagement of the intelligence community's work," he said. Additional info

#### **RN11. Split decision: Americans assess Obama's legacy** headline

WASHINGTON — Americans in a new USA TODAY/Suffolk University Poll rate the Affordable Care Act as President Obama's greatest achievement in the White House. Also, as his biggest failure. lead

In yet another sign of how polarized the United States remains, the signature initiative known as Obamacare draws the strongest praise from his supporters and the sharpest rebuke from his critics as Americans begin to consider how history will judge the nation's 44th president.

On one thing there is agreement across partisan lines: Six in 10 predict incoming president Donald Trump will significantly dismantle Obama's legacy. Three-fourths of Democrats call that a bad thing; three-fourths of Republicans call it a good one.

"The impression he pushed was that he wanted to undo everything on Day One, somehow, miraculously," says Megan Glidewell, 37, a college counselor from Waconia, Minn., who voted for Hillary Clinton. She was among those called in the poll. "I know that's not how it works, but it certainly felt like what he wanted and what the people who voted for him wanted."

About a third of those surveyed say Obama ultimately will be seen as a "good" president; 18% say he'll be a "great" one. But one in four say history will rate him as only "fair," and another one in four say he'll be seen as a "failed" president.

The split by party is predictably stark: 86% of Democrats say Obama will be judged to have been a good or great president; 83% of Republicans say he will be seen as a fair or failed one.

"There was a lot of hope but a lot of under-delivery with him," says David Ockrim, 30, who operates a Yankee Doodle Dandy food truck in New York City.

"A total failure," scoffs Stephen Spence, 69, of Mesa, Ariz. "On the economy, on immigration, on helping people from other countries that are fighting ISIS."

"I think history would judge him well, but it's probably going to take a while," says Queen Jones, 73, a retired teacher's assistant from Mount Pleasant, N.C. "I think he'll be judged well because of what he inherited when he came in and where the economy is right now." Story proper

The poll of 1,000 registered voters, taken Wednesday through Sunday, has a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Overall, Obama is leaving office with healthy ratings. By 55%-40%, Americans have a favorable opinion of him. That's much better than Trump's ratings, which remain underwater by 5 points — 41% favorable, 46% unfavorable — although the president-elect's standing has been improving. Just before Election Day, in late October, Trump was at 31% favorable, 61% unfavorable in the USA TODAY/Suffolk Poll.

Fifty-four percent now approve of the job Obama is doing as president.

When it comes to ranking his greatest achievements as president, close to one in four cite the Affordable Care Act. Nearly as many, 22%, name the economy's recovery after the Great Recession.

"If you look at the long-term history of the country, George W. Bush left him, frankly, with a pile of" trouble, says Kathleen Hoynes, 56, of Upper Gwynedd, north of Philadelphia, using an expletive and crediting Obama with rescuing the economy. That said, she went on, "I did not agree with a lot of what he did in not getting out of war and on race relations. He didn't do enough."

Indeed, dealing with the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan ranks second on the list of Obama's failures, and handling race relations is third. It was cited by 15% of whites and 13% of blacks. As the nation's only African-American president, expectations were high that his election represented a breakthrough in race relations.

The Affordable Care Act was cited by 27% on the list of his biggest failures, nearly twice as many as any other issue. Additional info

## **RN12. Lawyer: 'Appalled' by FBI warrant that shook Clinton** headline

WASHINGTON — The FBI warrant that shook Hillary Clinton's 2016 presidential campaign in its final two weeks has been unsealed, and the lawyer who requested it says it offers "nothing at all" to merit the agency's actions leading up to the Nov. 8 election. lead

The warrant was released in response to a Freedom of Information Act request by Los Angeles lawyer Randy Schoenberg, who wants to determine what probable cause the agency provided to suspect material on disgraced congressman Anthony Weiner's computer might be incriminating to Clinton. Weiner is the estranged husband of Clinton's top aide, Huma Abedin. Under the Fourth Amendment,

search and seizure can only be granted when proof of probable cause of criminal findings has been documented.

The letter confirms news reports in late October that the FBI had detected “non-content header information” suggesting correspondence with accounts involved in its already-completed investigation of Clinton's private email server. The FBI request concludes there is “probable cause to believe” that the laptop contained “evidence, contraband, fruits and/or items illegally possessed,” without providing specifics.

"I see nothing at all in the search warrant application that would give rise to probable cause, nothing that would make anyone suspect that there was anything on the laptop beyond what the FBI had already searched and determined not to be evidence of a crime, nothing to suggest that there would be anything other than routine correspondence between" Clinton and Abedin, Schoenberg said in an email to USA TODAY. It remains unknown "why they thought they might find evidence of a crime, why they felt it necessary to inform Congress, and why they even sought this search warrant," he said. "I am appalled." The FBI's Manhattan office did not immediately return a call seeking comment.

Clinton campaign officials echoed Schoenberg's complaints Tuesday. Campaign spokesman Brian Fallon said on Twitter that the "unsealed filings regarding Huma's emails reveals Comey's intrusion on the election was as utterly unjustified as we suspected at time." Story proper

The FBI concluded in July that there was no “clear evidence that Secretary Clinton or her colleagues intended to violate laws” and that “no reasonable prosecutor would bring such a case.” Then, two weeks before the election, Comey sent a three-paragraph letter to Congress that said in the course of an unrelated investigation investigators found emails that “appear to be pertinent” to Clinton’s private email server. Comey also wrote that he could not assess whether the material was “significant.”

The letter was so vague that Clinton’s opponents seized on it to shift the narrative from a damaging drumbeat of news stories about Donald Trump, including his past treatment of women. Trump called it “bigger than Watergate” and predicted that the FBI would “right the ship” after previously deciding against criminal charges.

Comey’s investigation was the primary cudgel for Trump and his supporters, who claimed — falsely — that Clinton was guilty of “criminal” activity. His large rallies regularly chanted “Lock her up!” and Clinton’s motorcade was greeted in city after city with angry crowds waving signs.

Abedin’s lawyers have also been requesting permission to review the warrant, which they say their client never saw and hadn’t or even been alerted to, preventing them from responding publicly in the final days of the campaign. Two days before the election, Comey confirmed there was no new information.

At the same time, Comey was in possession of evidence showing Russia was hacking into the Democratic Party apparatus, and Senate Minority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., accused him of holding back “explosive” information about Russian interference. The retiring senator said Comey may have violated the Hatch Act, which prohibits “activity directed towards the success or failure” of a candidate.

On Monday, former president Bill Clinton said his wife “fought through everything, and she prevailed against it all.” But she couldn’t endure the combination of the FBI’s interference and Russian meddling.

At the end, "we had the Russians and the FBI deal. But she couldn't prevail against that," Clinton told reporters in Albany.

Republicans have mocked the Clintons' contention and said it's an excuse for some of the strategic mistakes the campaign made.

Yet the election was decided by the smallest of margins in a handful of Rust Belt states. Nate Silver, a leading elections statistician and editor-in-chief of FiveThirtyEight, says "Comey had a large, measurable impact on the race" and that she "would almost certainly be president-elect if the election had been held" the day before the letter. He cited late-deciding voters breaking strongly against her enough to cost her Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania.

Schoenberg said more information needs to be made public before the matter is put to rest. "The FBI agent's name has not been disclosed, but I think that it may be appropriate to find out his/her name and determine what the motivations were, since it must have been obvious to the FBI that there was no real probable cause to believe they would find evidence of a crime," he said in a follow-up email. "It was very wrong for Director Comey to give that impression."

Schoenberg is a lawyer who gained notoriety by reclaiming Jewish-owned art seized by the Nazis and former president of the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust. Additional info

### **RN13. Newly certified Trump feuds with Bill Clinton** headline

Now that the Electoral College has officially made him president-elect, Donald Trump spent Tuesday holding meetings and feuding with former president Bill Clinton. lead

Responding to criticism from the ex-president, Trump said he and 2016 Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton lost this year's election because they failed to pay attention to essential states.

"They focused on wrong states," Trump said in a brief tweet burst.

In an interview with a weekly newspaper in New York state, Clinton said that Trump "doesn't know much," but "one thing he does know is how to get angry, white men to vote for him." Clinton also said that Trump called him after the election, another source of dispute between the two men.

Tweeted Trump: "Bill Clinton stated that I called him after the election. Wrong, he called me (with a very nice congratulations)."

The president-elect said Clinton is the one who "doesn't know much," including "how to get people, even with an unlimited budget, out to vote in the vital swing states (and more)."

While losing the popular vote to Hillary Clinton by more than 2.8 million, Trump triumphed in the Electoral College by winning more states. They included industrial states that had gone Democratic in recent presidential elections: Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Electors in those and other states ratified Trump's victory in Monday meetings of the Electoral College.

Despite the efforts of anti-Trump organizations, only two electors defected from the Republican candidate; five Democratic electors refused to vote for Clinton.

"With this historic step we can look forward to the bright future ahead," the president-elect said after the Electoral College vote. "I will work hard to unite our country and be the President of all Americans. Together, we will make America great again." Story proper

The president-elect is spending Christmas week at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Fla., where he is holding job interviews and planning meetings.

Trump will be sworn in as the nation's 45th president a month from Tuesday.

Trump also issued statements condemning deadly attacks in Germany and Turkey.

After a truck attack on a holiday market in Berlin, Trump said "innocent civilians were murdered in the streets as they prepared to celebrate the Christmas holiday ... These terrorists and their regional and worldwide networks must be eradicated from the face of the earth, a mission we will carry out with all freedom-loving partners."

Trump also spoke out after Russia's ambassador to Turkey, Andrei Karlov, was "assassinated by a radical Islamic terrorist."

He added: "The murder of an ambassador is a violation of all rules of civilized order and must be universally condemned." additional info

#### **RN14. Trump wins Electoral College vote as insurgency fizzles** headline

WASHINGTON — Donald Trump will — officially — become president next month. lead

Trump surpassed the 270 electoral votes needed from 538 electors casting their ballots, in a day of normally ceremonial voting that drew attention amid intense social media pressure and protests in state capitols.

Despite a last-minute push by outside progressive and Libertarian groups, there was no rebellion. In fact, most of the "faithless" electors appeared to be Hillary Clinton defectors in Washington state, with three voting for former secretary of State Colin Powell and one for Faith Spotted Eagle, a Native American environmental activist. Two Texas GOP electors went rogue and didn't vote for Trump.

The meetings, which occur more than a month after the Nov. 8 election, are typically a formality. This year, Trump critics mounted a vocal campaign appealing to the Republican electors pledged to vote for him. The official results of the vote will be announced before Congress on Jan. 6, although the results from each state were released throughout the day Monday.

Electors received thousands of emails and phone calls arguing Trump is unqualified, as the first president in the nation's history with no military or government experience and with potential conflicts of interest due to his business empire. Confirmation by the FBI and CIA that the Russian government hacked

Clinton's campaign and the Democratic National Committee seeking to help Trump win the election have amplified their calls.

"Frankly, at this point, I'm wondering if Putin helped Trump win the Republican primary," Chris Suprun, a Texas elector who's been an outspoken critic, said before the voting began. In Rhode Island, electors passed a motion calling for an independent, bipartisan investigation into Russian intervention in the election as Congress debates whether the matter should be reviewed by Republican-led committees or as an independent probe.

Thousands of protesters gathered outside state capitals throughout the country. Yet in the end, the rebellion fell far short of the dozens of potential faithless electors that some Trump opponents said could materialize. Story proper

Opponents would have needed 37 GOP electors to switch their votes. The one alternative to Trump, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, had told electors not to vote for him. Even if there were a mass defection, the matter would have kicked to the Republican-led House of Representatives, which was unlikely to override their own party's president. Further, the Republican National Committee conducted a parallel whip effort to make sure electors stick to the plan to vote for Trump.

Clinton won more than 2.8 million more votes than Trump nationwide. But Trump won a majority of the 538 electoral votes — the state-by-state system created by the nation's founders based on the size of a state's congressional delegation.

It's the second time in recent history, including Democrat Al Gore's loss in 2000 to George W. Bush, that the person winning the popular vote lost the election. Before that, it hadn't been since 1888, when Benjamin Harrison beat Grover Cleveland, that a candidate won the presidency despite losing the popular vote.

The trend is causing Democrats to question the system by which the nation chooses its leaders, according to a new USA TODAY/Suffolk University Poll. It finds 50% of registered voters believe the Electoral College should choose the president. Yet more than four in 10 — 42% — say the Constitution should be amended so the popular vote prevails in choosing the commander in chief. Liberals are most likely to want a change while conservatives want to keep the current system.

Trump assumes the mantle with an electorate deeply skeptical of his presidency, according to a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News poll. While the percentage of voters who view him positively has increased to 41%, that's 7 points less than those who view him unfavorably. While 45% said they were optimistic and satisfied about Trump as president, it's 21 points below Obama's number in January 2009 and 14 points below George W. Bush's number at the same time in 2000. Additional info



# **RN15. Trump is within his rights to use executive power, Obama says** headline

WASHINGTON — President Obama says he has no regrets about his go-it-alone use of executive power — even if President-elect Donald Trump can now use those same powers to roll back his policies. lead

"I think that he is entirely within his lawful power to do so," Obama said in an interview with National Public Radio broadcast Monday. "If he wants to reverse some of those rules, that's part of the democratic process."

In his traditional end-of-year public radio interview, Obama offered a wide-ranging defense of his use of presidential power as he prepares to turn the levers of that power over to man he once described as unfit for the presidency. Story proper

Obama argued that his use of executive action wasn't much different from his predecessors. What changed, he said, is that Congress became less willing to pass legislation.

"Congress has become so dysfunctional that more and more of a burden is placed on the agencies to fill in the gaps, and the gaps get bigger and bigger because they're not constantly refreshed and tweaked," he said. "And the bottom line is, if you want to right-size executive power relative to the other branches of government, the best way to do that is to have a healthy Congress in which the two parties are debating, disagreeing but also occasionally working together to pass legislation."

The same thing has happened on foreign policy, he said. The Obama administration has been relying a post-9/11 congressional war authorization intended for al-Qaeda in order to battle the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria.

"The danger is that over time, Congress starts feeling pretty comfortable with just having the president do all this stuff and not really having to weigh in," he said. "The president and the executive branch are always going to have greater latitude and greater authority when it comes to protecting America, because sometimes you just have to respond quickly and not everything that is a danger can be publicized and be subject to open debate."

But Obama also said he's installed "guardrails" on the president's war powers, setting up systems of internal accountability on issues like drone strikes and electronic surveillance by the National Security Agency.

"You know, there are some critics on the left who would argue we haven't gone far enough on that. I would argue that we've gotten it about right, although I'm the first one to admit that we didn't get it all right on day one," he said. Additional info

**Yellow** = Event (Actor, action, time, place) [Reports a newsworthy event, the main action]

**Red** = Commentary (Context, evaluation, expectations) [Establishes a point of view or the significance of the story. Observations, comparisons, expectations, etc.]

**Gray** = Detail (Names, locations, dates, numbers) [A definition or a description; a matter-of-factly statement about the nature of something.]

**Blue** = Background (Previous episodes, history) [Places an event in a chain of events]

**Green** = Attribution (Source) [Demonstrates reliability of information]

**Purple** = Follow-up (Consequences, reaction to event) [Describes what happened next]

Move name written at the end of move.

### Fake News

**FN1. BREAKING – Trump DEFIES Obama, Tells Americans What Obama is Doing Behind the Scenes**  
headline

Donald Trump was promised a smooth and respectful transition by President Barack Obama, but it's been anything but. Obama's massive ego and thin skin now has him publicly degrading Trump's landslide Electoral College victory and diligently working behind the scenes to thwart the will of the people. lead

Barack Obama sat in the Oval Office with Donald Trump about one month ago and vowed to do his best to foster a peaceful transition of power and to carry out the desire of the American people. Those lofty sentiments turned snarky quickly when it came time for Obama to start packing up his belongings and vacate the people's house.

Follow

Donald J. Trump ? @realDonaldTrump

Doing my best to disregard the many inflammatory President O statements and roadblocks. Thought it was going to be a smooth transition - NOT!

9:07 AM - 28 Dec 2016

16,738 16,738 Retweets 53,680 53,680 likes story proper

Over the course of the past month, Obama added a record number of new regulations across a myriad of federal agencies that try to control our lives – and livelihoods. In the past few days, he surpassed his own record and likely isn't done trying to curtail President-Elect Trump's authority after he is sworn in as the 45th president of the United States.

Obama instructed his ambassador to the United Nations to abstain from a vote which drastically impacted one of our most staunch allies, Israel. A veto by the United States, which has been done in the past, would have prevented the U.N. Security Council from attempting to create a “two-state solution” between Israel and the Palestinians by demanding that settlement building in disputed areas cease immediately.

Very quietly, Obama also welcomed more than 2,000 new Muslim refugees onto American soil. These people, largely men, already had their asylum requests denied by the Australian government. They were being held in a detention facility when Obama decided the American taxpayers should begin paying for their resettlement – regardless of the risks to national security. Additional info

President Obama had heralded George W. Bush’s commitment to a respectful transition and promised his distraught staff would adhere to the same level of professionalism and decorum. Instead, he led the charge to behave like a petulant spoiled child himself.

First, Michelle Obama sat down for a chat with Oprah Winfrey and claimed America is now without hope. Tens of millions of Americans are feeling hopeful for the first time in eight years, but those of us who live in flyover country or are part of blue collar communities or the middle class really don’t matter to liberals.

Lashing out at Donald Trump because We the People chose him over a corrupt, lying career politician simply showcases how shallow and self-involved Barack Obama and his wife truly are. There is nothing Democrats in Congress can do to stop Trump’s agenda from passing—thanks to Harry Reid’s short-sighted pushing for the “nuclear option.”

Michael Moore and his horde of liberal followers will not be able to stop Trump from being sworn in on January 20 – nor will they succeed in pushing his oath-taking ceremony inside. The efforts of #Disrupt20 protesters will fail just as surely as Jill Stein’s recount endeavors.

If Barack Obama wanted his legacy to involve appearing small, glib, and completely delusional, he has succeeded. He is now nothing more than a frustrating nuisance for President-Elect Donald Trump and the patriotic Americans who cast ballots in his favor. Soon Obama will finally be gone, and Trump can repeal his foolish liberal regulations and executive orders and put the nation back on the track to greatness and prosperity for ALL! Rant

## **FN2. BREAKING BOMBSHELL: NYPD Blows Whistle on New Hillary Emails: Money Laundering, Sex Crimes with Children, Child Exploitation, Pay to Play, Perjury** headline

New York Police Department detectives and prosecutors working an alleged underage sexting case against former Congressman Anthony Weiner have turned over a newly-found laptop he shared with wife Huma Abedin to the FBI with enough evidence “to put Hillary (Clinton) and her crew away for life,” NYPD sources told True Pundit. lead

NYPD sources said Clinton’s “crew” also included several unnamed yet implicated members of Congress in addition to her aides and insiders.

The NYPD seized the computer from Weiner during a search warrant and detectives discovered a trove of over 500,000 emails to and from Hillary Clinton, Abedin and other insiders during her tenure as secretary of state. The content of those emails sparked the FBI to reopen its defunct email investigation into Clinton on Friday.

But new revelations on the contents of that laptop, according to law enforcement sources, implicate the Democratic presidential candidate, her subordinates, and even select elected officials in far more alleged serious crimes than mishandling classified and top secret emails, sources said. NYPD sources said these new emails include evidence linking Clinton herself and associates to:

Money laundering

Child exploitation

Sex crimes with minors (children)

Perjury

Pay to play through Clinton Foundation

Obstruction of justice

Other felony crimes

NYPD detectives and a NYPD Chief, the department's highest rank under Commissioner, said openly that if the FBI and Justice Department fail to garner timely indictments against Clinton and co-conspirators, NYPD will go public with the damaging emails now in the hands of FBI Director James Comey and many FBI field offices.

"What's in the emails is staggering and as a father, it turned my stomach," the NYPD Chief said. "There is not going to be any Houdini-like escape from what we found. We have copies of everything. We will ship them to Wikileaks or I will personally hold my own press conference if it comes to that."

The NYPD Chief said once Comey saw the alarming contents of the emails he was forced to reopen a criminal probe against Clinton.

"People are going to prison," he said. Story proper

Meanwhile, FBI sources said Abedin and Weiner were cooperating with federal agents, who have taken over the non-sexting portions of the case from NYPD. The husband-and-wife Clinton insiders are both shopping for separate immunity deals, sources said.

"If they don't cooperate they are going to see long sentences," a federal law enforcement source said.

NYPD sources said Weiner or Abedin stored all the emails in a massive Microsoft Outlook program on the laptop. The emails implicate other current and former members of Congress and one high-ranking Democratic Senator as having possibly engaged in criminal activity too, sources said.

Prosecutors in the office of US Attorney Preet Bharara have issued a subpoena for Weiner's cell phones and travel records, law enforcement sources confirmed. NYPD said it planned to order the same phone and travel records on Clinton and Abedin, however, the FBI said it was in the process of requesting the

identical records. Law enforcement sources are particularly interested in cell phone activity and travel to the Bahamas, U.S. Virgin Islands and other locations that sources would not divulge.

The new emails contain travel documents and itineraries indicating Hillary Clinton, President Bill Clinton, Weiner and multiple members of Congress and other government officials accompanied convicted pedophile billionaire Jeffrey Epstein on his Boeing 727 on multiple occasions to his private island in the U.S Virgin Islands, sources said. Epstein's island has also been dubbed Orgy Island or Sex Slave Island where Epstein allegedly pimps out underage girls and boys to international dignitaries.

Both NYPD and FBI sources confirm based on the new emails they now believe Hillary Clinton traveled as Epstein's guest on at least six occasions, probably more when all the evidence is combed, sources said. Bill Clinton, it has been confirmed in media reports spanning recent years, that he too traveled with Epstein over 20 times to the island. Additional info

#### **Laptop Also Unveiled More Classified, Top Secret Breaches** subheadline

According to other uncovered emails, Abedin and Clinton both sent and received thousands of classified and top secret documents to personal email accounts including Weiner's unsecured campaign web site which is managed by Democratic political consultants in Washington D.C. lead

Weiner maintained little known email accounts that the couple shared on the website [anthonyweiner.com](http://anthonyweiner.com). Weiner, a former seven-term Democratic Congressman from New York, primarily used that domain to campaign for Congress and for his failed mayoral bid of New York City.

At one point, FBI sources said, Abedin and Clinton's classified and top secret State Department documents and emails were stored in Weiner's email on a server shared with a dog grooming service and a western Canadian bicycle shop.

However, Weiner and Abedin, who is Hillary Clinton's closest personal aide, weren't the only people with access to the Weiner's email account. Potentially dozens of unknown individuals had access to Abedin's sensitive State Department emails that were stored in Weiner's email account, FBI sources confirmed.

FEC records show Weiner paid more than \$92,000 of congressional campaign funds to Anne Lewis Strategies LLC to manage his email and web site. According to FBI sources, the D.C.-based political consulting firm has served as the official administrator of the [anthonyweiner.com](http://anthonyweiner.com) domain since 2010, the same time Abedin was working at the State Department. This means technically Weiner and Abedin's emails, including top secret State Department emails, could have been accessed, printed, discussed, leaked, or distributed by untold numbers of personnel at the Anne Lewis consulting firm because they can control where the website and its emails are pointed, FBI sources said. Story proper

According to FBI sources, the bureau's newly-minted probe into Clinton's use and handling of emails while she served as secretary of state, has also been broadened to include investigating new email-related revelations, including:

Abedin forwarded classified and top secret State Department emails to Weiner's email

Abedin stored emails, containing government secrets, in a special folder shared with Weiner warehousing over 500,000 archived State Department emails.

Weiner had access to these classified and top secret documents without proper security clearance to view the records

Abedin also used a personal yahoo address and her Clintonemail.com address to send/receive/store classified and top secret documents

A private consultant managed Weiner's site for the last six years, including three years when Clinton was secretary of state, and therefore, had full access to all emails as the domain's listed registrant and administrator via Whois email contacts.

Because Weiner's campaign website is managed by the third-party consultant and political email guru, FBI agents are burdened with the task of trying to decipher just how many people had access to Weiner's server and emails and who were these people. Or if the server was ever compromised by hackers, or other actors.

Abedin told FBI agents in an April interview that she didn't know how to consistently print documents or emails from her secure Dept. of State system. Instead, she would forward the sensitive emails to her yahoo, Clintonemail.com and her email linked to Weiner.

Abedin said, according to FBI documents, she would then access those email accounts via webmail from an unclassified computer system at the State Dept. and print the documents, many of which were classified and top secret, from the largely unprotected webmail portals.

Clinton did not have a computer in her office on Mahogany Row at the State Dept. so she was not able to read timely intelligence unless it was printed out for her, Abedin said. Abedin also said Clinton could not operate the secure State Dept. fax machine installed in her Chappaqua, NY home without assistance.

Perhaps more alarming, according to the FBI's 302 Report detailing its interview with Abedin, none of the multiple FBI agents and Justice Department officials who conducted the interview pressed Abedin to further detail the email address linked to Weiner. There was never a follow up, according to the 302 report.

But now, all that has changed, with the FBI's decision to reopen the Clinton email investigation and the husband and wife seeking immunity deals to testify against Clinton and other associates about the contents of the laptop's emails. Additional info

### **FN3. Turkey's Erdogan Says U.S. Supports ISIL: 'We Have Evidence With Pictures & Videos'** headline

Turkey's President Recep Erdogan has come out swinging today. With the U.S. led coalition (Britain and France included) recently suffering an embarrassing defeat in Aleppo, Syria when Iranian and Russian forces helped to liberate the city from ISIL, this latest incident could be seen as Turkey throwing salt on the U.S. wound.

Erdogan's bombshell statements highlighted what most of the world is now coming to accept as reality:

"They [the U.S.] give support to terrorist groups including Daesh (IS/ISIL). We have confirmed evidence, with pictures, photos and videos." lead

While no videos or pictures have been made public yet, the world can only hope that Erdogan and company can make good on his words by publicly disclosing their alleged evidence.

Adding to the disclosure was Iran's Defense Minister Hossein Dehghan:

"The Western coalition is of a formal nature, they have no real intention to fight neither in Syria nor in Iraq. We don't see any readiness on their part to play a truly useful and meaningful role in fighting IS, because it's them who have raised terrorists and they are interested in keeping them there. Maybe the coalition forces would like to see terrorists weakened, but certainly not destroyed, because those terrorists are their tool for destabilizing this region and some other parts of the world."

Of course, this statement is no longer just a theory or speculation, as U.S. House Representative from Hawaii, Tulsi Gabbard has introduced a bill that would stop the U.S. government from funding and supporting ISIL, both directly and indirectly. Tulsi stated a few things sure to get the attention of many:

"If you or I gave money, weapons or support to al-Qaeda or ISIS, we would be thrown in jail. Why does our gov get a free pass on this? The CIA has also been funneling weapons and money through Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar and others who provide direct and indirect support to groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda. This madness must end. We must stop arming terrorists. The Government must end this hypocrisy and abide by the same laws that apply to its' citizens." story proper

What is most interesting about Erdogan's comments today then is the fact that he is calling out the U.S. government for funding and arming ISIL and other terrorists groups, when he has also been called out for doing the same. Remember from the paragraph above that Tulsi Gabbard said Turkey is one of the countries arming and funding ISIL. We must also remember when Vladimir Putin said the same thing in November of 2015.

So, perhaps Turkey (or certain aspects within the military and intelligence community within Turkey) have stopped coordinating with the CIA and other intelligence groups in helping to aid ISIL. Putin and Erdogan have made it no secret as to their willingness to collaborate more over the past several months. One of the biggest signals of this growing collaboration between Russia and Turkey was the signing of the "Turkish Stream" pipeline in late October. Additionally, Moscow announced today that they will be "intensifying cooperation" between Turkey, Iran and themselves within Syria. Maybe, just maybe, Turkey has broken ties with the Western banking/political cabal. Time will tell.

It would make sense though in many ways if Turkey has broken off all or most ties with the Western cabal, as the world sees the writing on the wall for ISIL: Time is short.

Not only was ISIL defeated in Aleppo (the biggest battle to date), but they are being defeated in Mosul, Iraq. Today, Iraq's Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi told the world that ISIL would be defeated in Iraq within three months.

Perhaps Turkey has made a full pivot East and is now working to defeat the terrorist group they were once arming and funding. Stranger things have happened. We watch in great anticipation as to what will happen next. Additional info

#### FN4. **BREAKING: Capitol Hill Shooter Identified as Right Wing Extremist** headline

WASHINGTON DC – On Monday afternoon, an extremist carried out an attack on Capitol Hill, shooting and injuring a police officer. The man has been identified as Thomas Finnigan, a white supremacist from Maryland. He has been taken into police custody, although currently Capitol Hill, including Congress and the White House, remain on lockdown. lead

When the attack was carried out, Finnigan was described by eyewitnesses as trying to leave the visitor's center, and advance further into either the library, Supreme Court, or even the White House.

"All I heard was '[expletive removed] Obama! [expletive removed] liberals and ISIS! Make America great again!'" John Burke, a college student visiting the visitors center stated to ABC News. "Then we heard gun shots and were immediately instructed to leave the building."

Thomas Finnigan is a 32 year old white supremacist linked towards having a strong affinity for Republican frontrunner Donald Trump on his Facebook. He grew up in a lower class family in Tennessee, and later moved to Maryland. Not much else is known about the shooter. story proper

"It's concerning, how some of our own born-and-bred American citizens are turning into terrorists over political unrest," ABC political analyst Ana Cuddy said. "While in my own opinion, I must say I take no issue with the conservatives of the United States in general, this is not the first time a Donald Trump supporter specifically has carried out violent acts towards other members of the population. It is concerning to see how the Republican party has radicalized, and I hope the United States of America can learn its lesson from the treacherous acts Trump incites in our citizens."

UPDATE 4:00 PM EST: The lockdown has been lifted according to Capitol Police.

UPDATE 4:37 PM EST: According to Capitol Police, no officer was shot. However, two tourists were injured by shrapnel. Additional info

ABC news will continue to bring you updated news involving the Capitol Hill shooting as information comes to light.

#### FN5. **Egyptian paper: Transcript proves Kerry plotted UN resolution against Israel with Palestinians — Report** headline

On Tuesday, the Times of Israel reported that an Egyptian newspaper published what it called transcripts of meetings between top US officials — including Secretary of State John Kerry — and Palestinian officials that could, if true, prove Israel's accusations that the Obama regime was behind the anti-Israel UN resolution approved by the Security Council. lead

According to the Times of Israel:



At the same time, a report in an Israeli daily Tuesday night pointed to Britain helping draft the resolution and high drama in the hours leading up to the vote, as Jerusalem tried to convince New Zealand to bury the Security Council measure.

In a meeting in early December with top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat, US Secretary of State John Kerry told the Palestinians that the US was prepared to cooperate with the Palestinians at the Security council, Israel's Channel 1 TV said, quoting the Egyptian Al-Youm Al-Sabea newspaper.

Also present at the meeting were US National Security Adviser Susan Rice, and Majed Faraj, director of the Palestinian Authority's General Intelligence Service.

Kerry is quoted as saying that he could present his ideas for a final status solution if the Palestinians pledge they will support the proposed framework. The US officials advised the Palestinians to travel to Riyadh to present the plan to Saudi leaders.

According to the Times, the Egyptian report fits Israeli claims that it has "ironclad" proof the Obama regime helped craft the anti-settlement resolution.

"We have ironclad information that emanates from sources in the Arab world and that shows the Obama administration helped craft this resolution and pushed hard for its eventual passage," said David Keyes, spokesman for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Story proper

Additionally, the Guardian said Israel may provide this information to the incoming Trump administration:

Doubling down on the claim a few hours later the controversial Israeli ambassador to Washington, Ron Dermer, went even further suggesting it had gathered evidence that it would present to the incoming Trump administration.

"We will present this evidence to the new administration through the appropriate channels. If they want to share it with the American people, they are welcome to do it," Dermer told CNN.

According to Dermer, not only did the US not stand by Israel's side during the vote, it "was behind this ganging up on Israel at the UN".

Jeff Dunetz noted:

Israel fears that Kerry lays out his comprehensive vision for two-state solution and then turns it into another Security Council resolution imposing additional anti-Israel settlement terms on Israel, or at upcoming peace conference in Paris on Jan. 15 that Israel is not attending, all before the Israel-hating Obama leaves the White House three weeks from this coming Friday. Another possibility is the US recognizing a Palestinian State, any of the above eliminates the possibility of a negotiated solution.

The Egyptian report did not detail whose transcripts of the meeting it had obtained or how it had obtained them.

At the end of the meeting, the report said, Rice and Kerry requested that the content of the discussion remain secret because of the sensitivity of the matter during the transition period in

the U.S. The same way Kerry kept negotiations for the Iran deal secret from Israel until it was too late.

The Obama regime, however, has denied allegations that it was behind the resolution.

"We did not draft this resolution; we did not introduce this resolution. We made this decision when it came up for a vote," Obama deputy national security adviser Ben Rhodes said Friday. Additional info

#### **FN6. Obama Signs Executive Order Declaring Investigation Into Election Results; Revote Planned For Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>** Headline

WASHINGTON, D.C. (AP) — Following the results of Tuesday night's election, President Obama has signed Executive Order 13805, which orders a full recount of all votes cast in the election and calls for a special election to be held on December 19th. Lead Obama signed the order in response to the concerns of thousands of voters across the country who said that they were prevented from casting a ballot on election day, too many absentee ballots have not been found or counted, equipment failures, as well as concerns that some members of the electoral college may have acted unethically.

"People all over the country have been flooding my office with calls, telling my staff of horror stories about being harassed and intimidated by poll workers," Obama told reporters. "Many have even said that they were flat out denied entry into the voting booths to cast their ballots if they were wearing a Hillary Clinton shirt or other signs showing support for her as President. This was especially bad in areas of Florida and North Carolina where there are high numbers of Latino and African American voters. We must investigate these claims. The margin of victory is too close to call, and the outcome of this election is too important. There is just too many legal challenges in too many states to just call this a victory for Trump."

Under the President's order, the votes cast in all precincts nationwide will be recounted, and all poll workers who took part in Tuesday's election will be subjected to strict background checks. This process is expected to take 30 days. In precincts where the Department of Justice has cause to believe that voter suppression has occurred, new elections will be held on Dec. 19th, with those results being used to help determine who will represent the individual states in the electoral college.

Not surprisingly, Donald Trump is not happy with the president's decision.

"Crooked Hillary lost this election fair and square. They tried to rig this election against me, but the American people didn't allow that to happen. President Obama doesn't care about what the American people want. I said the system was rigged all along, and this proves I was right."

The president also said that the DOJ will be taking a close look at the members of the electoral college.

"We have received information from a very reliable source that suggests there may have been some collusion between the members of the electoral college and poll workers in certain swing states. We still need to investigate these claims, but if they are true, we will take all the appropriate actions necessary."

Story proper

Paul Horner, a professor of political science at UCLA, believes that the issues with the electoral college run much deeper than this election.

"Most people feel that it is their right as citizens to pick the president of the United States, but there is nothing in the constitution that says that. Hillary Clinton won the popular vote by more than 200,000 votes, but because of the electoral college, she still lost. That decision is reserved solely for the 538 electors who meet in their respective states on December 19th. What the people are actually voting for are their states' electors, not for the President. Though the system is odd and unfair, it has persisted because many insist that it works just fine as it is, with the winner of the popular and electoral vote usually matching. That does not mean, however, that it will continue to work just fine in the future. The way the system is set up could cause it to malfunction in some potentially terrifying ways, this recent election being one of them.

Political Analyst Matt Daemon told ABC News that he agrees with the President's Executive Order and said that he would like to see the electoral college done away with altogether.

"[The electoral college] is a f—king joke; we should be using the popular vote instead. It may have made sense in 1788, but so did the three fifths compromise. Everyone should have an equal vote, and that's just not the case with the electoral college. You know what the electoral college gave us? It gave us George W. Bush. It gave us a war in Iraq, and the worst recession since the great depression. It's time to bring our system into the 21st century. I hope Obama fixes this, because president Trump is going to be a nightmare."

Obama finished up the press conference explaining his plans for moving forward.

"We're going to investigate the FBI into their role in all of this," Obama said. "Why did FBI director James Comey on Sunday say that the agency is not recommending charges against Clinton after reviewing all of her emails; declaring Hillary Clinton a free woman conveniently just one day before the election? Why wasn't this news released earlier? How many votes were lost because of this?" Obama said. "If all of these questions cannot be answered by our deadline set in December, a recount will be ordered."

additional info

If you have any questions about the recount or the special December 19th election, you can call the Obama administration's special election hotline at (785) 273-0325.

## **FN7. Obama's Racist Attacks Against White Working Class Caused Historic Democrat Party Collapse**

### Headline

Since 2008 Obama and Democrats lost white working class voters across the US. Lead

Middle class voters are Republican Trump voters.

Obama just sealed the deal with his anti-white racism.

The map below shows how Obama lost working class white voters in every state since taking office except for Vermont and Massachusetts.

[map]

New York Times Story Proper

Democrats may have lost the white working class vote for generations.

It's Obama's fault.

And just this week Barack Obama was out again railing against white working class Americans for his party's woes.

iPatriot reported:

Obama also blamed Rush Limbaugh, Fox News, and the NRA for distracting the country from his message of "hope and change", particularly during the holiday season.

"If we're not actually out there changing the narrative like we are during campaigns, then folks in a lot of these communities, what they're hearing is Obama wants to take away my guns," he said. "Obama is disrespecting my culture and is primarily concerned with coastal elites and minorities." Ah yes, the problem was you couldn't mindlessly brainwash the country Barack, not that your message was fundamentally anti-American.

Obama defended the robbers and hosted Black Lives Matter in the White House.

The Black Lives matter led to several police deaths, lootings and burned businesses.

Law-abiding white and black Americans have had enough.

Obama will be missed when he leaves the White House...

By the criminals and thugs. Additional Info

#### **FN8. Another Person Investigating The Clintons Turns Up Dead** Headline

Today, a young woman working for an anti-child trafficking organization was laid to rest. Her name was Monica Petersen, and she turned up dead in Haiti on Sunday after posting "I Found A Smoking Gun" on social media. Her friends and family are calling foul as her family cannot get believable information from Haitian authorities, and Ms. Petersen just happened to publicly post some reports that implicate the Clintons' involvement in alleged human trafficking via a mine run by Hillary Clinton's brother Tony Rodham. Lead

A compilation of the various threads from reddit, Facebook, Twitter, Imgur and more can be found on the Reddit The Donald page here.

Go figure. Just like any number of people either close to the Clintons or investigating them who could possibly end up a material witness during a trial, Ms. Petersen ends up dead. This, for those following the "fake news" propaganda coming out of globalists, leftists, and the disgraced legacy media, is why there is a "Clinton Body Count." Monica Petersen's name may well be added to it. Story proper

According to several reports, Haiti has been a nexus for child trafficking for a number of years. In fact, found in the thousands of emails released by WikiLeaks from John Podesta's email account, information surfaced that Hillary Clinton assisted a Haitian woman, Laura Silsby, known to be involved in child trafficking in 2010 when she was caught trying to take 33 children – not orphans – out of Haiti. The two women's history is known to reach back at least fifteen years. Also in the Podesta emails are several archaic conversations about pizza that have taken on the aura of internet lore (what some call conspiracy theories) known as #pizzagate, and reportedly is the tip of the iceberg in an international child trafficking ring.

The rabbit hole gets very deep when one considers how many times Bill Clinton is known to have traveled Jeffrey Epstein's private child molestation island.

Did Monica Petersen get too close? A tenacious young woman investigating one of the most egregious crimes any human can commit, if she got too close to the criminal element and was known to them, it is a definite possibility. A good friend of hers named Bella claims she found out what happened and is refusing to elaborate on public next-pagemessaging boards. Whatever the case is, the people around the Clintons and those investigating them sure do tend to end up dead. Additional info

#### **FN9. Turkey President Claims Has Video Evidence Obama Is Supporting ISIS** Headline

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey is once again making accusations that the United States is directly supporting ISIS. He's been mixed up in rumors of his supposed profiteering from the illicit ISIS oil trade in the past, so his accusations carry with them a need for healthy skepticism. Still, he is adamant in his allegations and says he's got irrefutable evidence. Lead

His claims go beyond the single step of removal from direct involvement, our maintaining the implausible plausible deniability of aiding the so-called "freedom fighters" or rebels, the insulation the US has relied upon in arming, training and financing Obama's terrorist allies in the past. It's more than an acknowledgment of the rebranding of ISIS terrorists, our supposed enemy, as anonymous factions under the White House subversive.

It's beyond the contention of the Russians or the photographic evidence that John McCain was foolish enough to provide, what is basically little more than a choice in headscarf colors, the difference between their equivalent of the crips and the bloods, as being the "legitimizing factor" for aiding our terrorist enemies as the non-existent moderate freedom fighters. Additional info

Erdogan said in his Tuesday comments that he has "confirmed evidence" that US-led forces have supported ISIS. Erdogan stated in no uncertain terms that "it's very clear" the US is supporting ISIS. He said, "They were accusing us of supporting Daesh (ISIS). Now they give support to terrorist groups including Daesh, YPG, PYD. It's very clear. We have confirmed evidence, with pictures, photos and videos." YPG and PYD are Kurdish groups that Erdogan regards as terrorists operating against Turkey.

Flanked by the visiting Guinean President Alpha Conde, Erdogan said, "The coalition forces are unfortunately not keeping their promises. Whether they do or they don't, we will continue along this path in a determined way. There is no going back on the path we have set out on."

Erdogan complained “They are supporting all the terror groups — the YPG, PYD but also including Daesh (ISIS) It’s quite clear, perfectly obvious,” he said, adding that Turkey could provide proof in pictures and video. During a November visit to Pakistan Erdogan made similar claims, alleging “the West stands by Daesh (ISIS) right now” and its weapons were Western-made. At the time he declined to provide his evidence for inspection. Story proper

He needs to be more forthcoming this time around. If he’s got the evidence, show it. Certainly none of us would be surprised to learn that Obama is behind ISIS, it’s already well known. We would like to put our hands on his proof, though, in order to properly charge Obama and convict him. Additional info

#### **FN10. Police Just Raided Democrat HQ! What They Found Was Nasty...** Headline

Voters on the right have been waiting for this for a long time! Police have finally raided a Democratic strategic headquarters, and the results are devastating! Lead

According to Philadelphia Newspaper recently, the Pennsylvania State Police raided Democrat-linked group FieldWorks looking for evidence of voter fraud.

What the warrant says exactly is not known but agents on the scene said they were searching for “templates . . . utilized to construct fraudulent voter registration forms” and “completed voter registration forms containing same or similar identifying information of individuals on multiple forms.”

Story proper

FYI, Fieldworks LLC is one of the largest national voter registration groups in America. They are working indirectly for the Democratic National Committee and Mrs. Clinton.

They quickly claimed that they are against voter fraud, but then again, who would actually admit that anyway?

Additional info

#### **FN11. WHOA – Liberals Attacked Trump Inauguration Singer, But They Got KNOCKED OUT by America!** Headline

Finding a performer for the inauguration of President-elect Donald Trump has not been easy, because many famous Liberals are still sitting up on their high horses.

Jackie Evancho, a teenage opera singer who got her start on America’s Got Talent, has agreed to sing the National Anthem for the inauguration. Many liberals have attacked her and her family, but proud Americans have supported her. Her music sales have quadrupled thanks to the American people! (via Breitbart) lead

Evancho's 2011 "Dream With Me" album and her 2010 "O Holy Night" are both sitting at No. 2 on the Billboard charts because of the American people and the pride they have in their country and this talented girl!

For her part, Jackie Evancho has expressed her excitement to sing at this event, which is a breath of fresh air compared to the other singers who have flat out refused to be a part of it, even though they were not even asked in the first place.

"I have recently been asked by the President-elect to perform the National Anthem for the swearing-in ceremony at the inauguration," Evancho stated. "I'm so excited. It's going to be awesome." At least someone has some American pride.

But liberals, of course, aren't about to hold back their disdain, even against a teenage girl. This is particularly ironic because of the details of Evancho's family.

"My family is kind of a big target. I have a transgender sister and so a lot of hate goes towards us," Evancho claimed. "But I also get a lot of love. So, we pay most attention to that. Sometimes we get really annoyed with the hate, everyone does, we have to admit it but we just ignore it." story proper

So, Liberals are adding further hate directed at an innocent family who are trying to support their transgender member. I thought liberals were supportive of transgender people? Apparently they only care about the hate directed at them if the transgender person agrees with their political views.

At 16, Jackie Evancho's list of accomplishments already includes six studio albums. Her "O Holy Night EP" made her the youngest solo artist to reach platinum on the U.S. Billboard and also ranked her as the No. 1 Classical Albums Artist of 2011.

As one of the few people who are scheduled to perform for Donald Trump's inauguration, the young singer clearly has a ton of talent. The Radio City Rockettes and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir also planned to perform for the incoming President.

Liberals are nothing but a bunch of sore losers, and the fact that they would harass a young girl because of her choice to perform is sickening. The truth is, Liberals will direct their hatred at anyone if they can't get their way. Additional info

## FN12. White House Cleaners Also Happy To See Obama's Go! Headline

It won't just be the majority of Americans outside of Washington D.C who will be glad to see the Obama's leave the White House.

In a startling development, we understand that White House cleaning staff will also be looking forward to seeing the back of the Obama Family. White House cleaning manager, Maria Hernandez has revealed that most of her staff will be so relieved they are going, "it was really hard on myself and my team. Mr President used to leave rubbish everywhere – old newspapers, M&M wrappers, you name it". Lead

It's understood that shortly after the Trump election victory, a number of White House cleaning staff took the following afternoon off for a celebratory drink at local cocktail bar 'off the record'. It was here that they finally realized 8 years of extremely hard cleaning would subside.

"It was terrible" said Antonia Juan-Fernando, "Mr Obama used to love cookies and the crumbs he would leave, aye yai yai". An optimistic Juan-Fernando believes that not only will Trump, 'Make America Great Again', but that he will also know how to do some basic cleaning. Story proper

The Obama administration is yet to comment. Generally White House head of staff do not comment on such matters. Additional info

**FN13. BREAKING: Obama Just Gave ISIS Exactly What they Wanted!!** Headline

While everyone was busy reading Donald Trump's Twitter President Obama did something sick in Syria that will make ISIS sooooo happy.

He has just ordered that a waiver be given for the US military to give aid (weapons) to random groups in Syria. This means that ISIS will definitely be getting their hands on some new US guns!! (H/T -RT) lead

Wikimedia Commons

Obama released an official statement about his decision yesterday that read:

"I HEREBY DETERMINE THAT THE TRANSACTION, ENCOMPASSING THE PROVISION OF DEFENSE ARTICLES AND SERVICES TO FOREIGN FORCES, IRREGULAR FORCES, GROUPS, OR INDIVIDUALS ENGAGED IN SUPPORTING OR FACILITATING ONGOING U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS TO COUNTER TERRORISM IN SYRIA, IS ESSENTIAL TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES." story proper

What the Hell, Obama? Are you trying to help ISIS or are you just that stupid?

Seriously, we have been pumping weapons into the Middle East for decades and look where it has gotten us! It's time to STOP!!

Hopefully Trump will make it in time to put a stop to this nonsense and save America from 10 more years of WAR. Rant

**FN14. BREAKING: Washington Post Just Caught Red Handed in MASSIVE Fake News Scandal!!**  
Headline

This is really one of those funny, beautiful moments in history when a big, old, and unreliable news source like the Washington Post gets caught red handed in their own web of lies.

You see, just last week the Washington Post published an article in which they claimed to have an actual list of news companies that work for Vladimir Putin. Well, surprise, surprise, that all turned out to be a big old load of CRAP! lead



Today the Post was forced to add new “notes” to that article which essentially read that their list was crap and the source they claimed was reliable is actually just a bunch of Liberal morons.

Screenshot of editor’s note admitting that Washington Post published an unverified Fake News list.

Their “source” was an anonymous website called PropOrNot which said they had obtained a list of people directly employed by Russia or “idiots” that repeat Russian Propaganda.

The beautiful irony is that the only website dumb enough to actually believe their list was the Washington Post. Do you know why? Because they are nothing but scam artists. Story proper

Let me break this down plain and simple for you folks. WaPo and other old news sources lost all of their Trust when they lied about the election this year. Of course, the problem goes even further back to when they LIED about Nukes being in Iraq.

Now, these big papers are losing money and scared of becoming irrelevant. They are trying to freak out the public with all sorts of lies about their competitors just to save their own asses. SHAME ON THEM! (H/T – Daily Mail)

Trump is luckily fighting back, but it’s important that regular folks like you and I do our best to get this information shared everywhere so we can end the reign of the LYING mainstream media once-and-for-all!! Additional info

**FN15. BREAKING – Dems Caught Counting Hillary Votes 6 TIMES In THIS City, TIME FOR PRISON!**  
Headline

It turns out that the election may have been rigged after all. It’s just that Hillary Clinton and her Democrats can’t do any job right.

Entire precincts surrounding Detroit may be un-recountable, due to suspected voter fraud! Officials have found that, in hundreds of cases, the poll book numbers do not match the electronic voting machine printouts, as per The Detroit News. lead

Michigan state law holds that if a precinct is unable to be recounted, then the original count must stand.

Some of the problems may be due to biased elections staff. The machines used in Michigan, according to Detroit Elections Director Daniel Baxter, are quite old. In fact, 87 of the machines’ optical scanners broke on election day.

When there is such a problem with the machines, a ballot may get jammed in the scanner. The election staff then has to pull the ballot out and try again. This could result in a ballot being counted twice, or even six times, as the staff tries to get the ballot into the machine again and again.

The staff can manually erase the duplicate votes, but Baxter says that “in many cases, [they] failed to do so.” What, they forgot? Or perhaps they wanted to count the vote multiple times?

Of course, many of these precincts are strongly Democrat, at least according to historic voting trends. This includes Wayne County where Clinton received roughly two-thirds of the vote. If such widespread voter fraud has occurred, perhaps Michigan is a lot less blue than we thought. Story proper

There are other explanations for the vote discrepancies as well. As WND is reporting, Republican candidate Ken Crider has been keeping a close eye on his District's elections process. Crider said, in a Facebook post, "Penny's precinct, Detroit Precinct #152, had an unbroken seal and everything looked proper. The tag on the box said 306 and the book said 306 and the ticket said 306, so there should be 306 paper ballots on the box, right?"

"Well, when they pulled out the ballots, the stack seemed short, and when they finished separating the two page ballot to count the presidential page only, guess how many ballots were in the box? 304 no, 299 nope, 200 nada, how about 100 wrong again. There were only exactly 50 paper ballots in a locked sealed box that again was supposed to have 306. HMMMM." Crider is right to point out this mysterious circumstance.

If the seal was unbroken and there were no holes in the ballot box, then why was there an incorrect amount of ballots in there? It would be understandable to be off by one vote, but to be off by hundreds is highly suspicious and points, once again, to the election staff.

In my opinion, each of these staff members should be barred from working elections again. Whether through negligence or intention, something very bad has been going on here. Additional info

H/T: Angry Patriot Movement

What do you think of these revelations from the Michigan recount effort? Please share this story on Facebook and tell us what you think because we want to hear YOUR voice!